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OF A
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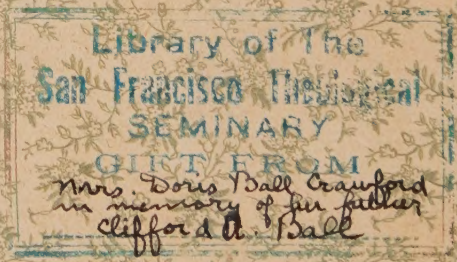
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Summoning the Oestrich Tribe to Arms!

(*Page 19.*)

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THE FALLEN STAR

OR, THE

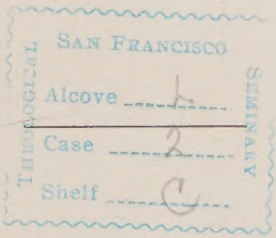
HISTORY OF A FALSE RELIGION

BY SIR E. L. BULWER, BART.

ALSO, A DISSERTATION

ON THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

BY LORD BROUGHAM.



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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

RELIGION, says Noah Webster, in his *American Dictionary of the English Language*, is derived from "Religo, to bind anew;" and, in this *History of a False Religion*, our author has shown how easily its votaries were insnared, deceived, and mentally bound in a labyrinth of falsehood and error, by a designing knave, who established a new religion and a new order of priesthood by imposing on their ignorance and credulity.

The history of the origin of one supernatural religion will, with slight alterations, serve to describe them all. Their claim to credence rests on the exhibition of so-called miracles — that is, on a violation of the laws of nature,—for, if religions were founded on the demonstrated truths of science, there would be no mystery, no supernaturalism, no miracles, no skepticism, no false religion. We would have only verified truths and demonstrated facts for the basis of our belief. But this simple foundation does not satisfy the unreasoning multitude. They demand signs, portents, mysteries, wonders and miracles

for their faith; and the supply of prophets, knaves and impostors has always been found ample to satisfy this abnormal demand of credulity.

Designing men, even at the present day, find little difficulty in establishing new systems of faith and belief. Joseph Smith, who invented the Mormon religion, had more followers and influence in this country at his death, than the Carpenter's Son obtained centuries ago from the unlettered inhabitants of Palestine; and yet Smith achieved his success among educated people in this so-called enlightened age, while Jesus taught in an age of semi-barbarism and faith, when both Jews and Pagans asserted and believed that beasts, birds, reptiles and even fishes understood human language, were often gifted with human speech, and sometimes seemed to possess even more than ordinary human intelligence.

They taught that the serpent, using the language of sophistry, beguiled Eve in Eden, who in turn corrupted Adam, her first and only husband. At the baptism of Jesus by John in the river Jordan, the voice of a dove resounded in the heavens, saying, quite audibly and distinctly, "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." Balaam disputed with his patient beast of burden, on their celebrated journey in the land of Moab, and the ass proved wiser in the argument that ensued than the inspired prophet who bestrode him. The great fish Oannes

left his native element and taught philosophy to the Chaldeans on dry land. One reputable woman, of Jewish lineage,—the mother of an interesting family—was changed to a pillar of salt in Sodom; while another female of great notoriety, known to fame as the celebrated "Witch of Endor," raised Samuel from his grave in Ramah. Saint Peter found a shilling in the mouth of a fish which he caught in the Sea of Galilee, and this lucky incident enabled the impecunious apostle to pay the "tribute money" in Capernaum. Another famous Israelite, —so it is said,—broke the record of balloon ascensions in Judea, and ascended into heaven in a chariot of fire.

In an age of ignorance wonders abound, prodigies occur, and miracles become common. The untaught masses are easily deceived, and their unreasoning credulity enables them to proudly boast of their unquestioning faith. When their feelings are excited and their passions aroused by professional evangelists, they even profess to believe that which they cannot comprehend; and, in the satirical language of Bulwer, they endeavor to "*assist their ignorance by the conjectures of their superstition.*"

Among the multitudes of diverse and opposing religions which afflict mankind, it is self-evident that but one religion may justly claim the inspiration of truth, and it is equally evident to all reasoning minds that that religion is the religion of kindness

and humanity,—the religion of noble thoughts and generous deeds,—which removes the enmities of race and creed, and "makes the whole world kin!" And which, in its observance, is blessed with sympathy, friendship, happiness and love.

This religion needs no creed, no profession of faith, no incense, no prayer, no penance, no sacrifice. Its whole duty consists in comforting the afflicted, assisting the unfortunate, protecting the helpless, and in honestly fulfilling our duties to our fellow mortals. In the language of Confucius, the ancient Chinese Sage, it is simply "to behave to others as I would require others to behave to me."

"Do unto others as you would they should do unto you," says Jesus; and in the Epistle of James, we are told that "Pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

The same benign and generous conduct is commended in even grander and nobler language in the lectures to the French Masonic Lodges: "Love one another, teach one another, help one another. That is all our doctrine, all our science, all our law."

It is believed that the learned dissertation of Lord Brougham on the *Origin of Evil*, which is annexed to this work, will need no commendation to ensure its careful perusal.

PETER ECKLER.

HISTORY OF A FALSE RELIGION.

An Allegory of the Stars.

AND the Stars sat, each on his ruby throne, and watched with sleepless eyes upon the world.

It was the night ushering in the new year, a night on which every star receives from the archangel that then visits the universal galaxy, its peculiar charge.

The destinies of men and empires are then portioned forth for the coming year, and, unconsciously to ourselves, our fates become minioned to the stars.

A hushed and solemn night is that in which the dark gates of time open to receive the ghost of the dead year, and the young and radiant stranger rushes forth from the clouded chasms of eternity.

On that night, it is said that there are given to the spirits that we see not, a privilege and a power; the dead are troubled in their forgotten graves, and men feast and laugh, while demon and angel are contending for their doom.

It was night in heaven; all was unutterably silent, the music of the spheres had paused, and not a sound came from the angels of the stars; and they who sat upon those shining thrones were three thousand and ten, each resembling each.

Eternal youth clothed their radiant limbs with celestial beauty, and on their faces was written the dread of calm, that fearful stillness which feels not, sympathizes not with the dooms over which it broods.

War, tempest, pestilence, the rise of empires, and their fall, they ordain, they compass, unexultant and uncompassionate. The fell and thrilling crimes that stalk abroad when the world sleeps —the parricide with his stealthy step, and horrent brow, and lifted knife; the unwifed mother that glides out and looks behind, and behind, and shudders, and casts her babe upon the river, and hears the wail, and pities not—the splash, and does not tremble!

These the starred kings behold—to these they lead the unconscious step; but the guilt blanches not their lustre, neither doth remorse wither their unwrinkled youth.

Each star wore a kingly diadem; round the loins of each was a graven belt, graven with many and mighty signs; and the foot of each was on a burning ball, and the right arm dropped over the knee as they bent down from their thrones; they moved

not a limb or feature, save the finger of the right hand, which ever and anon moved slowly, pointing, and regulated the fates of men as the hand of the dial speaks the career of time.

One only of the three thousand and ten wore not the same aspect as his crowned brethren; a star, smaller than the rest, and less luminous. The countenance of this star was not impressed with the awful calmness of the others; but there were sullenness and discontent upon his mighty brow.

And this star said to himself—"Behold, I am created less glorious than my fellows, and the archangel apportions not to me the same lordly destinies. Not for me are the dooms of kings and bards, the rulers of empires, or, yet nobler, the swayers and harmonists of souls. Sluggish are the spirits and base the lot of the men I am ordained to lead through a dull life to a fameless grave. And wherefore?—Is it mine own fault, or is it the fault which is not mine, that I was woven of beams less glorious than my brethren? Lo! when the archangel comes, I will bow not my crowned head to his decrees. I will speak, as the ancestral Lucifer before me: *he* rebelled because of his glory, *I* because of my obscurity; *he* from the ambition of pride, and *I* from its discontent."

And while the star was thus communing with himself, the upward heavens were parted as by a long river of light, and adown that stream swiftly,

and without sound, sped the archangel visitor of the stars; his vast limbs floated in the liquid lustre, and his outspread wings, each plume the glory of a sun, bore him noiselessly along; but thick clouds veiled his lustre from the eyes of mortals, and while above all was bathed in the serenity of his splendor, tempest and storm broke below over the children of the earth:

"He bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet."

And the stillness on the faces of the stars became yet more still, and the awfulness was humbled into awe. Right above their thrones paused the course of the archangel; and his wings stretched from east to west, overshadowing with the shadow of light the immensity of space. Then forth in the shining stillness, rolled the dread music of his voice: and, fulfilling the heraldry of god, to each star he appointed the duty and the charge, and each star bowed his head yet lower as he heard the fiat, while his throne rocked and trembled at the majesty of the word. But at last, when each of the brighter stars had, in succession, received the mandate, and the viceroyalty over the nations of the earth, the purple and diadems of kings—the archangel addressed the lesser star as he sat apart from his fellows:

"Behold," said the archangel, "the rude tribes of the north, the fishermen of the river that flows

beneath, and the hunters of the forests, that darken the mountain-tops with verdure! these be thy charge, and their destinies thy care. Nor deem thou, O star of the sullen beams, that thy duties are less glorious than the duties of thy brethren; for the peasant is not less to thy master and mine than the monarch; nor doth the doom of empires rest more upon the sovereign than on the herd. The passions and the heart are the dominion of the stars—a mighty realm; nor less mighty beneath the hide that garbs the shepherd, than the jewelled robes of eastern kings."

Then the star lifted his pale front from his breast, and answered the archangel:

"Lo!" he said, "ages have past, and each year thou hast appointed me to the same ignoble charge. Release me, I pray thee, from the duties that I scorn; or, if thou wilt that the lowlier race of men be my charge, give unto me the charge not of many, but of one, and suffer me to breathe into him the desire that spurns the valleys of life, and ascends its steeps. If the humble are given to me, let there be amongst them one whom I may lead on the mission that shall abase the proud; for, behold, O Appointer of the Stars, as I have sat for uncounted years upon my solitary throne, brooding over the things beneath, my spirit hath gathered wisdom from the changes that shift below. Looking upon the tribes of earth, I have seen how the

multitude are swayed, and tracked the steps that lead weakness into power; and fain would I be the ruler of one who, if abased, shall aspire to rule."

As a sudden cloud over the face of noon was the change on the brow of the archangel.

"Proud and melancholy star," said the herald, "thy wish would war with the courses of the invisible destiny, that, throned far above, sways and harmonizes all; the source from which the lesser rivers of fate are eternally gushing through the heart of the universe of things. Thinkest thou that thy wisdom, of itself, can lead the peasant to become a king?"

And the crowned star gazed undauntedly on the face of the archangel, and answered:

"Yea!—grant me but one trial!"

Ere the archangel could reply, the farthest centre of the heaven was rent as by a thunderbolt; and the divine herald covered his face with his hands, and a voice low and sweet, and mild with the consciousness of unquestionable power, spoke forth to the repining star:

"The time has arrived when thou mayest have thy wish. Below thee, upon yon solitary plain, sits a mortal, gloomy as thyself, who, born under thy influence, may be moulded to thy will."

The voice ceased, as the voice of a dream. Silence was over the seas of space, and the archangel,

once more borne aloft, slowly soared away into the farther heaven, to promulgate the divine bidding to the stars of far-distant worlds.

But the soul of the discontented star exulted within itself; and it said, "I will call forth a king from the valley of the herdsmen, that shall trample on the kings subject to my fellows, and render the charge of the contemned star more glorious than the minions of its favored brethren; thus shall I revenge neglect—thus shall I prove my claim hereafter to the heritage of the great of earth!"

At that time, though the world had rolled on for ages, and the pilgrimage of man had passed through various states of existence, which our dim traditionary knowledge has not preserved, yet the condition of our race in the northern hemisphere was then what *we*, in our imperfect lore, have conceived to be among the earliest."

FORMING A NEW RELIGION.

BY a rude and vast pile of stones, the masonry of arts forgotten, a lonely man sat at midnight, gazing upon the heavens. A storm had just passed from the earth — the clouds had rolled away, and the high stars looked down upon the rapid waters of the Rhine; and no sound save the roar of the waves, and the dripping of the rain from the mighty trees, was heard around the ruined pile: the white sheep lay scattered on the plain, and slumber with them. He sat watching over the herd, lest the foes of a neighboring tribe seized them unawares, and thus he communed with himself:

"The king sits upon his throne, and is honored by a warrior race, and the warrior exults in the trophies he has won; the step of the huntsman is bold upon the mountain-top, and his name is sung at night round the pine-fires, by the lips of the bard; and the bard himself hath honor in the hall. But I, who belong not to the race of kings, and

whose limbs can bound not to the rapture of war, nor scale the eyries of the eagle and the haunts of the swift stag; whose hand cannot string the harp, and whose voice is harsh in the song; *I* have neither honor nor command, and men bow not the head as I pass along; yet do I feel within me the consciousness of a great power that should rule my species—not obey. My eye pierces the secret hearts of men—I see their thoughts ere their lips proclaim them; and I scorn, while I see, the weakness and the vices which I never shared. I laugh at the madness of the warrior—I mock within my soul at the tyranny of kings. Surely there is something in man's nature more fitted to command—more worthy of renown, than the sinews of the arm, or the swiftness of the feet, or the accident of birth!"

As Morven, the son of Osslah, thus mused within himself, still looking at the heavens, the solitary man beheld a star suddenly shooting from its place, and speeding through the silent air, till it as suddenly paused right over the midnight river, and facing the inmate of the pile of stones.

As he gazed upon the star strange thoughts grew slowly over him. He drank, as it were, from its solemn aspect, the spirit of a great design. A dark cloud rapidly passing over the earth, snatched the star from his sight; but left to his awakened mind the thoughts and the dim scheme that had come to him as he gazed.

When the sun arose one of his brethren relieved him of his charge over the herd, and he went away, but not to his father's home. Musingly he plunged into the dark and leafless recesses of the winter forest; and shaped out of his wild thoughts, more palpably and clearly, the outline of his daring hope.

While thus absorbed, he heard a great noise in the forest, and, fearful lest the hostile tribe of the Alrich might pass that way, he ascended one of the loftiest pine-trees, to whose perpetual verdure the winter had not denied the shelter he sought, and, concealed by its branches, he looked anxiously forth in the direction whence the noise had proceeded.

And IT came—it came with a tramp and a crash, and a crushing tread upon the crunched boughs and matted leaves that strewed the soil—it came—it came, the monster that the world now holds no more—the mighty mammoth of the North!

Slowly it moved in its huge strength along, and its burning eyes glittered through the gloomy shade: its jaws, falling apart, showed the grinders with which it snapped asunder the young oaks of the forest; and the vast tusks, which, curved downward to the midst of its massive limbs, glistened white and ghastly, curdling the blood of one destined hereafter to be the dreaded ruler of the men of that distant age.

The livid eyes of the monster fastened on the

"The Mighty Mammoth of the North." (*The Dinotherium. Agassiz. p. 12.*)

form of the herdsman, even amidst the thick darkness of the pine. It paused—it glared upon him—its jaws opened, and a low deep sound, as of gathering thunder, seemed to the son of Osslah as the knell of a dreadful grave. But after glaring on him for some moments, it again, and calmly, pursued its terrible way, crashing the boughs as it marched along, till the last sound of its heavy tread died away upon his ear.

Ere yet, however, before Morven had summoned the courage to descend the tree, he saw the shining of arms through the bare branches of the wood, and presently a small band of the hostile Alrich came into sight. He was perfectly hidden from them; and, listening as they passed him, he heard one say to another:

"The night covers all things; why attack them by day?"

And he who seemed the chief of the band, answered:

"Right. To-night, when they sleep in their city, we will upon them. Lo! they will be drenched in wine, and fall like sheep into our hands."

"But where, O chief," said a third of the band, "shall our men hide during the day? for there are many hunters among the youth of the Oestrich tribe, and they might see us in the forest unawares, and arm their race against our coming."

"I have prepared for that," answered the chief,

"Is not the dark cavern of Oderlin at hand? Will it not shelter us from the eyes of the victims?"

Then the men laughed, and, shouting, they went their way adown the forest.

When they were gone Morven cautiously descended, and, striking into a broad path, hastened to a vale that lay between the forest and the river in which was the city where the chief of his country dwelt.

As he passed by the warlike men, giants in that day, who thronged the streets (if streets they might be called), their half garments parting from their huge limbs, the quiver at their backs, and the hunting spears in their hands, they laughed and shouted out, and, pointing to him, cried:

"Morven, the woman! Morven, the cripple! what dost thou among men?"

For the son of Osslah was small in stature and of slender strength, and his step had halted from his birth; but he passed through the warriors unheedingly.

At the outskirts of the city he came upon a tall pile, in which some old men dwelt by themselves, and counselled the king when times of danger, or when the failure of the season, the famine, or the drought, perplexed the ruler, and clouded the savage fronts of his warrior tribe.

They gave the counsels of experience, and when experience failed, they drew, in their believing

ignorance, assurances and omens from the winds of heaven, the changes of the moon, and the flights of the wandering birds. Filled (by the voices of the elements, and the variety of mysteries which ever shift along the face of things, unsolved by the wonder which pauses not, the fear which believes, and that eternal reasoning of all experience, which assigns causes to effects) with the notion of superior powers, *they assisted their ignorance by the conjectures of their superstition.* But as yet they knew no craft and practised no *voluntary* delusion; they trembled too much at the mysteries, which had created their faith, to seek to belie them. They counselled as they believed, and the bold dream had never dared to cross men thus worn and grey with age, of governing their warriors and their kings by the wisdom of deceit.

The son of Osslah entered the vast pile with a fearless step, and approached the place at the upper end of the hall, where the old men sat in conclave.

"How, base-born and craven limbed!" cried the eldest, who had been a noted warrior in his day; "darest thou enter unsummoned amidst the secret councils of the wise men? Knowest thou not, scatterling! that the penalty is death?"

"Slay me, if thou wilt," answered Morven, "but hear!

"As I sat last night in the ruined palace of our

ancient kings, tending, as my father bade me, the sheep that grazed around, lest the fierce tribe of Alrich should descend unseen from the mountains upon the herd, a storm came darkly on; and when the storm had ceased, and I looked above on the sky, I saw a star descend from its height towards me, and a voice from the star said, 'Son of Osslah, leave thy herd and seek the council of the wise men, and say unto them, that they take thee as one of their number, or that sudden will be the destruction of them and theirs.'

"But I had courage to answer the voice, and I said, 'Mock not the poor son of the herdsman. Behold they will kill me if I utter so rash a word, for I am poor and valueless in the eyes of the tribe of Oestrich, and the great in deeds and the grey of hair alone sit in the council of the wise men.'

"Then the voice said, "Do my bidding, and I will give thee a token that thou comest from the powers that sway the seasons and sail upon the eagles of the winds. Say unto the wise men that this very night, if they refuse to receive thee of their band, evil shall fall upon them, and the morrow shall dawn in blood.'

"Then the voice ceased, and a cloud passed over the star; and I communed with myself, and came, O dread fathers, mournfully unto you. For I feared that ye would smite me because of my bold tongue, and that ye would sentence me to the

Morven Communing with the Star.

(*Page 16.*)

death, in that I asked what may scarce be given even to the sons of kings."

Then the grim elders looked one at the other, and marvelled much, nor knew they what answer they should make to the herdsman's son.

At length one of the wise men said, "Surely there must be truth in the son of Osslah, for he would not dare to falsify the great lights of heaven. If he had given unto men the words of the star, verily we might doubt the truth. But who would brave the vengeance of the gods of night?"

Then the elders shook their heads approvingly; but one answered and said:

"Shall we take the herdsman's son as our equal? No!"

The name of the man who thus answered was Darvan, and his words were pleasing to the elders.

But Morven spoke out:

"Of a truth, O councillors of kings! I look not to be an equal with yourselves. Enough if I tend the gates of your palace, and serve you as the son of Osslah may serve;" and he bowed his head humbly as he spoke.

Then said the chief of the elders, for he was wiser than the others, "But how wilt thou deliver us from the evil that is to come? Doubtless the star hath informed thee of the service thou canst render to us if we take thee into our palace, as well as the ill that will fall on us if we refuse."

Morven answered meekly: "Surely, if thou acceptest thy servant, the star will teach him that which may requite thee; but as yet he knows only what he has uttered."

Then the sages bade him withdraw, and they communed with themselves, and they differed much; but though fierce men, and bold at the war cry of a human foe, they shuddered at the prophecy of a star. So they resolved to take the son of Osslah, and suffer him to keep the gate of the council-hall.

He heard their decree and bowed his head, and went to the gate, and sat down by it in silence.

And the sun went down in the west, and the first stars of the twilight began to glimmer, when Morven started from his seat, and a trembling appeared to seize his limbs. His lips foamed; an agony and a fear possessed him; he writhed as a man whom the spear of a foeman has pierced with a mortal wound, and suddenly fell upon his face on the stony earth.

The elders approached him; wondering, they lifted him up. He slowly recovered as from a swoon; his eyes rolled wildly.

"Heard ye not the voice of the star?" he said.

And the chief of the elders answered, "Nay, we heard no sound."

Then Morven sighed heavily.

"To me only the word was given. Summon

instantly, O councillors of the king! summon the armed men, and all the youth of the tribe, and let them take the sword and the spear, and follow thy servant. For lo! the star hath announced to him that the foe shall fall into our hands as the wild beast of the forests."

The son of Osslah spoke with the voice of command, and the elders were amazed.

"Why, pause ye?" he cried. "Do the gods of the night lie? On my head rest the peril if I deceive ye."

Then the elders communed together; and they went forth and summoned the men of arms, and all the young of the tribe; and each man took the sword and the spear, and Morven also. And the son of Osslah walked first, still looking up at the star; and he motioned them to be silent, and move with a stealthy step.

So they went through the thickest of the forest, till they came to the mouth of a great cave, overgrown with aged and matted trees, and it was called the cave of Oderlin; and he bade the leaders place the armed men on either side the cave, to the right and to the left, among the bushes.

So they watched silently till the night deepened, when they heard a noise in the cave and the sound of feet, and forth came an armed man; and the spear of Morven pierced him, and he fell dead at the mouth of the cave. Another and another, and

both fell! Then loud and long was heard the war-cry of Alrich, and forth poured, as a stream over a narrow bed, the river of armed men.

And the sons of Oestrich fell upon them, and the foe were sorely perplexed and terrified by the suddenness of the battle and the darkness of the night; and there was a great slaughter.

And when the morning came, the children of Oestrich counted the slain, and found the leader of Alrich and the chief men of the tribe amongst them, and great was the joy thereof.

So they went back in triumph to the city, and they carried the brave son of Osslah on their shoulders, and shouted forth, "Glory to the servant of the star."

And Morven dwelt in the council of the wise men.

Now the king of the tribe had one daughter, and she was stately amongst the women of the tribe, and fair to look upon. And Morven gazed upon her with the eyes of love, but he did not dare to speak.

Now the son of Osslah laughed secretly at the foolishness of men; he loved them not, for they had mocked him; he honored them not, for he had blinded the wisest of their elders.

He shunned their feasts and merriment, and lived apart and solitary.

The austerity of his life increased the mysterious

Massacre of the Alrich tribe in the cavern of Oderlin.

(*Page 20.*)

homage which his commune with the stars had won him, and the boldest of the warriors bowed his head to the favorite of the gods.

One day he was wandering by the side of the river, and he saw a large bird of prey rise from the earth, and give chase to a hawk that had not yet gained the full strength of its wings. From his youth the solitary Morven had loved to watch, in the great forests and by the banks of the mighty stream, the habits of the things which nature had submitted to man; and looking now on the birds, he said to himself, "Thus is it ever; by cunning or by strength each thing wishes to master its kind."

While thus moralizing, the larger bird had stricken down the hawk, and it fell terrified and panting at his feet.

Morven took the hawk in his hands, and the vulture shrieked above him, wheeling nearer and nearer to its protected prey; but Morven scared away the vulture, and placing the hawk in his bosom, he carried it home, and tended it carefully, and fed it from his hand until it had regained its strength; and the hawk knew him, and followed him as a dog.

And Morven said, smiling to himself, "Behold, *the credulous fools around me put faith in the flight and motions of birds.* I will teach this poor hawk to minister to my ends."

So he tamed the bird, and tutored it according to its nature; but he concealed it carefully from others, and cherished it in secret.

The king of the country was old and like to die, and the eyes of the tribe were turned to his two sons, nor knew they which was the worthier to reign.

And Morven passing through the forest one evening, saw the younger of the two, who was a great hunter, sitting mournfully under an oak, and looking with musing eyes upon the ground.

"Wherefore musest thou, O swift footed Siror?" said the son of Osslah; "and wherefore art thou sad?"

"Thou canst not assist me," answered the prince, sternly; "take thy way."

"Nay," answered Morven, "thou knowest not what thou sayest; am I not the favorite of the stars?"

"Away, I am no graybeard whom the approach of death makes doting: talk not to me of the stars; I know only the things that my eye sees and my ear drinks in."

"Hush," said Morven, solemnly, and covering his face; "hush! lest the heavens avenge thy rashness. But, behold, the stars have given unto me to pierce the secret hearts of others; and I can tell thee the thoughts of thine."

"Speak out, base-born!"

"Thou art the younger of two, and thy name is less known in war than the name of thy brother; yet wouldst thou desire to be set over his head, and to sit on the high seat of thy father?"

The young man turned pale.

"Thou hast truth in thy lips," said he, with a faltering voice.

"Not from me, but from the stars, descends the truth."

"Can the stars grant my wish?"

"They can; let us meet to-morrow." Thus saying, Morven passed into the forest.

The next day, at noon, they met again.

"I have consulted the gods of night, and they have given me the power that I prayed for, but on one condition."

"Name it."

"That thou sacrifice thy sister on their altars; thou must build up a heap of stones, and take thy sister into the wood, and lay her on the pile, and plunge thy sword into her heart; so only shalt thou reign."

The prince shuddered, and started to his feet, and shook his spear at the pale front of Morven.

"Tremble," said the son of Osslah, with a loud voice. "Hark to the gods, who threaten thee with death, that thou hast dared to lift thine arm against their servant!"

As he spoke, the thunder rolled above; for one

of the frequent storms of the early summer was about to break.

The spear dropped from the prince's hand; he sat down and cast his eyes on the ground.

"Wilt thou do the bidding of the stars, and reign?" said Morven.

"I will!" cried Siror, with a desperate voice.

"This evening, then, when the sun sets, thou wilt lead her hither, alone; I may not attend thee. Now, let us pile the stones."

Silently the huntsman bent his vast strength to the fragments of rock that Morven pointed to him, and they built the altar, and went their way.

And beautiful is the dying of the great sun, when the last song of the birds fades into the lap of silence; when the islands of the cloud are bathed in light, and the first star springs up over the grave of day!

"Whither leadest thou my steps, my brother?" said Orna; "and why doth thy lip quiver? and why dost thou turn away thy face?"

"Is not the forest beautiful; doth it not tempt us forth, my sister?"

"And wherefore are those heaps of stone piled together?"

"Let others answer; *I* piled them not."

"Thou tremblest, brother: we will return."

Threatened Sacrifice of Orna.

(*Page 25.*)

"Not so; by those stones is a bird that my shaft pierced to-day; a bird of beautiful plumage that I slew for thee."

"We are by the pile: where hast thou laid the bird?"

"Here!" cried Siror; and he seized the maiden in his arms, and, casting her on the rude altar, he drew forth his sword to smite her to the heart.

Right over the stones rose a giant oak, the growth of immemorial ages; and from the oak, or from the heavens, broke forth a loud and solemn voice:

"Strike not, son of kings! the stars forbear their own: the maiden thou shalt not slay; yet shalt thou reign over the race of Oestrich; and thou shall give Orna as a bride to the favorite of the stars. Arise, and go thy way!"

The voice ceased: the terror of Orna had overpowered for a time the springs of life; and Siror bore her home through the wood in his strong arms.

"Alas!" said Morven, when, at the next day, he again met the aspiring prince; "alas! the stars have ordained me a lot which my heart desires not; for I, lonely of life, and crippled of shape, am insensible to the fires of love; and ever, as thou and thy tribe know, I have shunned the eyes of women, for the maidens laughed at my halting step and my sullen features; and so in my youth I

learned betimes to banish all thoughts of love. But since they told me (as they declared to *thee*), that only through that marriage, thou, O beloved prince! canst obtain thy father's plumed crown, I yield me to their will."

"But," said the prince, "not until I am king can I give thee my sister in marriage; for thou knowest that my sire would smite me to the dust, if I asked him to give the flower of our race to the son of the herdsman Osslah."

"Thou speakest the words of truth. Go home and fear not: but, when thou art king, the sacrifice must be made, and Orna mine. Alas! how can I dare to lift my eyes to her! But so ordain the dread kings of the night!—Who shall gainsay their word?"

"The day that sees me king, sees Orna thine," answered the prince.

Morven walked forth, as was his wont, alone; and he said to himself, "The king is old, yet may he live long between me and mine hope!" and he began to cast in his mind how he might shorten the time.

Thus absorbed, he wandered on so unheedingly, that night advanced, and he had lost his path among the thick woods, and knew not how to regain his home; so he lay down quietly beneath a tree, and rested till day dawned.

Then hunger came upon him, and he searched

among the bushes for such simple roots as those with which, for he was ever careless of food, he was used to appease the cravings of nature.

He found, among other more familiar herbs and roots, a red berry of a sweetish taste, which he had never observed before. He ate of it sparingly, and had not proceeded far in the wood before he found his eyes swim, and a deadly sickness come over him. For several hours he lay convulsed on the ground expecting death; but the gaunt spareness of his frame, and his unvarying abstinence, prevailed over the poison, and he recovered slowly, and after great anguish: but he went with feeble steps back to the spot where the berries grew, and, plucking several, hid them in his bosom, and by nightfall regained the city.

The next day he went forth among his father's herds, and seizing a lamb, forced some of the berries into its stomach, and the lamb, escaping, ran away, and fell down dead. Then Morven took some more of the berries and boiled them down, and mixed the juice with wine, and he gave the wine in secret to one of his father's servants, and the servant died.

Then Morven sought the king, and coming into his presence alone, he said unto him, "How fares my lord?"

The king sat on a couch, made of the skins of wolves, and his eye was glassy and dim; but vast

were his aged limbs, and huge was his stature, and he had been taller by a head than the children of men, and none living could bend the bow he had bent in youth. Grey, gaunt and worn, as some mighty bones that are dug at times from the bosom of the earth—a relic of the strength of old.

And the king said, faintly, and with a ghastly laugh:

"The men of my years fare ill. What avails my strength? Better had I been born a cripple like thee, so should I have had nothing to lament in growing old."

The red flush passed over Morven's brow; but he bent humbly—

"O king, what if I could give thee back thy youth? what if I could restore to thee the vigor which distinguished thee above the sons of men, when the warriors of Alrich fell like grass before thy sword?"

Then the king uplifted his dull eyes, and he said:

"What meanest thou, son of Osslah? Surely I hear much of thy great wisdom, and how thou speakest nightly with the stars. Can the gods of the night give unto thee the secret to make the old young?"

"Tempt them not by doubt," said Morven, reverently. "All things are possible to the rulers of the dark hour; and, lo! the star that loves thy

servant spake to him at the dead of night, and said, 'Arise, and go unto the king; and tell him that the stars honor the tribe of Oestrich, and remember how the king bent his bow against the sons of Alrich; wherefore, look thou under the stone that lies to the right of thy dwelling—even beside the pine-tree, and thou shalt see a vessel of clay, and in the vessel thou wilt find a sweet liquid, that shall make the king thy master forget his age forever.'

"Therefore, my lord, when the morning rose I went forth, and looked under the stone, and behold the vessel of clay; and I have brought it hither to my lord, the king."

"Quick—slave—quick! that I may drink and regain my youth!"

"Nay, listen, O king! farther said the star to me:

"'It is only at night, when the stars have power, that this their gift will avail; wherefore, the king must wait till the hush of the midnight, when the moon is high, and then may he mingle the liquid with his wine.

"'And he must reveal to none that he hath received the gift from the hand of the servant of the stars. For THEY do their work in secret, and when men sleep; therefore they love not the babble of mouths, and he who reveals their benefits shall surely die.'"

"Fear not," said the king, grasping the vessel; "none shall know: and, behold, I will rise on the morrow; and my two sons—wrangling for my crown—verily, I shall be younger than they!"

Then the king laughed loud; and he scarcely thanked the servant of the stars, neither did he promise him reward: for the kings in those days had little thought—save for themselves.

And Morven said to him, "Shall I not attend my lord? for without me, perchance, the drug might fail of its effect."

"Aye," said the king, "rest here."

"Nay," replied Morven; "thy servants will marvel and talk much, if they see the son of Osslah sojourning in thy palace. So would the displeasure of the gods of night perchance be incurred. Suffer that the lesser door of the palace be unbarred, so that at the night hour, when the moon is midway in the heavens, I may steal unseen into thy chamber, and mix the liquid with thy wine."

"So be it," said the king. "Thou art wise, though thy limbs are crooked and curt; and the stars might have chosen a taller man."

Then the king laughed again; and Morven laughed too, but there was danger in the mirth of the son of Osslah.

The night had begun to wane, and the inhabitants of Oestrich were buried in deep sleep, when, hark! a sharp voice was heard crying out in the

streets, "Woe, woe! Awake, ye sons of Oestrich —woe!"

Then forth, wild — haggard — alarmed — spear in hand, rushed the giant sons of the rugged tribe, and they saw a man on a height in the middle of the city, shrieking, "Woe!" and it was Morven, the son of Osslah!

And he said unto them, as they gathered round him, "Men and warriors, tremble as ye hear.

"The star of the west hath spoken to me, and thus saith the star:

"'Evil shall fall upon the kingly house of Oestrich — yea, ere the morning dawns; wherefore, go thou mourning into the streets, and wake the inhabitants to woe!'

"So I rose and did the bidding of the star."

And while Morven was yet speaking, a servant of the king's house ran up to the crowd, crying loudly:

"The king is dead!"

So they went into the palace and found the king stark upon his couch, and his huge limbs all cramped and crippled by the pangs of death, and his hands clenched as if in menace of a foe — the foe of all living flesh!

Then fear came on the gazers, and they looked on Morven with a deeper awe than the boldest warrior would have called forth: and they bore him back to the council-hall of the wise men, wail-

ing and clashing their arms in woe, and shouting, ever and anon:

"*Honor to Morven the prophet!*"

And that was the first time the word PROPHET was ever used in those countries.

At noon, on the third day from the king's death, Siror sought Morven, and he said:

"Lo, my father is no more, and the people meet this evening at sunset to elect his successor, and the warriors and the young men will surely choose my brother, for he is more known in war. Fail me not, therefore."

"Peace, boy!" said Morven, sternly; "nor dare to question the truth of the gods of night."

For Morven now began to presume on his power among the people, and to speak as rulers speak, even to the sons of kings.

And the voice silenced the fiery Siror, nor dared he to reply.

"Behold," said Morven, taking up a chaplet of colored plumes, "wear this on thy head, and put on a brave face — for the people like a hopeful spirit — and go down with thy brother to the place where the new king is to be chosen, and leave the rest to the stars.

"But, above all things, forget not that chaplet; it has been blessed by the gods of night."

The prince took the chaplet and returned home.

It was evening, and the warriors and chiefs of

the tribe were assembled in the place where the new king was to be elected.

And the voices of the many favored Prince Voltoch, the brother of Siror, for he had slain twelve foeman with his spear; and verily, in those days, that was a great virtue in a king.

Suddenly there was a shout in the streets, and the people cried out:

"Way for Morven, the prophet, the prophet!"

For the people held the son of Osslah in even greater respect than did the chiefs.

Now, since he had become of note, Morven had assumed a majesty of air which the son of the herdsman knew not in his earlier days; and albeit his stature was short, and his limbs halted, yet his countenance was grave and high.

He only of the tribe wore a garment that swept the ground, and his head was bare, and his long black hair descended to his girdle, and rarely was change or human passion seen in his calm aspect.

He feasted not, nor drank wine, nor was his presence frequent in the streets.

He laughed not, neither did he smile, save when alone in the forest—and then he laughed at the follies of his tribe.

So he walked slowly through the crowd, neither turning to the left nor to the right, as the crowd gave way; and he supported his steps with a staff of the knotted pine.

And when he came to the place where the chiefs were met, and the two princes stood in the centre, he bade the people around him proclaim silence.

Then mounting on a huge fragment of rock, he thus spake to the multitude:

"Princes, warriors and bards! ye, O council of the wise men! and ye, O hunters of the forests, and snarers of the fishes of the streams! harken to Morven, the son of Osslah.

"Ye know that I am lowly of race, and weak of limb; but did I not give into your hands the tribe of Alrich, and did ye not slay them in the dead of night with a great slaughter?

"Surely, ye must know that this of himself did not the herdsman's son; surely he was but the agent of the bright gods that love the children of Oestrich.

"Three nights since, when slumber was on the earth, was not my voice heard in the streets?

"Did I not proclaim woe to the kingly house of Oestrich? and verily the dark arm had fallen on the bosom of the mighty, that is no more.

"Could I have dreamed this thing merely in a dream, or was I not as the voice of the bright gods that watch over the tribes of Oestrich?

"Wherefore, O men and chiefs! scorn not the son of Osslah, but listen to his words; for are they not the wisdom of the stars?

"Behold, last night, I sat alone in the valley,

and the trees were hushed around, and not a breath stirred; and I looked upon the star that counsels the son of Osslah; and I said:

"'Dread conqueror of the cloud! thou that bathest thy beauty in the streams and piercest the pine-boughs with thy presence; behold thy servant grieved because the mighty one hath passed away, and many foes surround the houses of my brethren; and it is well that they should have a king valiant and prosperous in war, the cherished of the stars.

"'Wherefore, O star! as thou gavest into our hands the warriors of Alrich, and didst warn us of the fall of the oak of our tribe, wherefore, I pray thee, give unto the people a token that they may choose that king whom the gods of the night prefer!'

"Then a low voice, sweeter than the music of the bard, stole along the silence.

"'Thy love for thy race is grateful to the stars of night: go then, son of Osslah, and seek the meeting of the chiefs and the people to choose a king, and tell them not to scorn thee because thou art slow to the chase, and little known in war; for the stars give thee wisdom as a recompense for all.

"'Say unto the people that as the wise men of the council shape their lessons by the flight of birds, so by the flight of birds shall a token be given unto them, and they shall choose their kings.

"'For,' saith the star of night, 'the birds are children of the winds, they pass to and fro along the ocean of the air, and visit the clouds that are the warships of the gods.

"'And their music is but broken melodies which they gleam from the harps above.

"'Are they not the messengers of the storm?

"'Ere the stream chafes against the bank, and the rain descends, know ye not, by the wail of birds and their low circles over the earth, that the tempest is at hand?

"'Wherefore, wisely do ye deem that the children of the air are the fit interpreters between the sons of men and the lords of the world above.

"'Say then to the people and the chiefs, that they shall take, from among the doves that nest in the roof of the palace, a white dove, and they shall let it loose in the air, and verily the gods of the night shall deem the dove as a prayer coming from the people, and they shall send a messenger to grant the prayer and give to the tribes of Oestrich a king worthy of themselves.'

"With that the star spoke no more."

Then the friends of Voltoch murmured among themselves, and they said, "Shall this man dictate to us who shall be king?"

But the people and the warriors shouted:

"Listen to the star; do we not give or deny

battle according as the bird flies—shall we not by the same token choose him by whom the battle should be led?"

And the thing seemed natural to them, for it was after the custom of the tribe.

Then they took one of the doves that built in the roof of the palace, and they brought it to the spot where Morven stood, and he, looking up to the stars and muttering to himself, released the bird.

There was a copse of trees a little distance from the spot, and as the dove ascended, a hawk suddenly rose from the copse and pursued the dove; and the dove was terrified, and soared circling high above the crowd, when, lo, the hawk, poising itself one moment on its wings, swooped with a sudden swoop, and, abandoning its prey, alighted on the plumed head of Siror.

"Behold," cried Morven, in a loud voice, "behold your king!"

"Hail, all hail the king!" shouted the people. "All hail the chosen of the stars!"

Then Morven lifted his right hand, and the hawk left the prince, and alighted on Morven's shoulder.

"Bird of the gods!" said he, reverently, "hast thou not a secret message for my ear?" Then the hawk put its beak to Morven's ear, and Morven bowed his head submissively; and the hawk rested

with Morven from that moment and would not be scared away.

And Morven said:

"The stars have sent me this bird, that, in the day-time, when I see them not, we may never be without a counsellor in distress."

So Siror was made king, and Morven the son of Osslah was constrained by the king's will to take Orna for his wife; and the people and the chiefs honored Morven, the prophet, above all the elders of the tribe.

One day Morven said unto himself, musing, "Am I not already equal with the king? nay, is not the king my servant? did I not place him over the heads of his brothers? am I not, therefore, more fit to reign than he is? shall I not push him from his seat?

"It is a troublesome and stormy office to reign over the wild men of Oestrich, to feast in the crowded hall, and to lead the warriors to the fray.

"Surely, if I feasted not, neither went out to war, they might say, This is no king, but the cripple Morven; and some of the race of Siror might slay me secretly.

"But can I not be greater far than kings, and continue to choose and govern them, living as now at mine own ease?

"*Verily, the stars shall give me a new palace, and many subjects.*"

Among the wise men was Darvan; and Morven feared him, for his eye often sought the movements of the son of Osslah.

And Morven said, "It were better to TRUST this man than to BLIND, for surely I want a helpmate and a friend."

So he said to the wise man as he sat alone watching the setting sun:

"It seemeth to me, O Darvan! that we ought to build a great pile in honor of the stars, and the pile should be more glorious than all the palaces of the chiefs and the palace of the king; for are not the stars our masters?

"And thou and I should be the chief dwellers in this new palace, and we would serve the gods of night, and fatten their altars with the choicest of the herd, and the freshest of the fruits of the earth."

And Darvan said:

"Thou speakest as becomes the servant of the stars. But will the people help to build the pile, for they are a war-like race and they love not toil?"

And Morven answered:

"*Doubtless the stars will ordain the work to be done. Fear not.*"

"In truth thou art a wondrous man, thy words ever come to pass," answered Darvan; "and I wish thou wouldest teach me, friend, the language of the stars."

"Assuredly if thou servest me thou shalt know,"

answered the proud Morven; and Darvan was secretly wroth that the son of the herdsman should command the service of an elder and a chief.

And when Morven returned to his wife he found her weeping much.

Now she loved the son of Osslah with an exceeding love, for he was not savage and fierce as the men she had known, and she was proud of his fame among the tribe; and he took her in his arms and kissed her, and asked her why she wept.

Then she told him that her brother, the king, had visited her and had spoken bitter words of Morven.

"He taketh from me the affection of my people," said Siror, "and blindeth them with lies. And since he hath made me king, what if he take my kingdom from me? Verily, a new tale of the stars might undo the old."

And the king had ordered her to keep watch on Morven's secrecy, and to see whether truth was in him when he boasted of his commune with the Powers of Night.

But Orna loved Morven better than Siror, therefore she told her husband all.

And Morven resented the king's ingratitude, and was troubled much, for a king is a powerful foe; but he comforted Orna, and bade her dissemble and complain also of him to her brother, so that he might confide to her unsuspectingly whatsoever he might design against Morven.

There was a cave by Morven's house in which he kept the sacred hawk, and wherein he secretly trained and nurtured other birds against future need, and the door of the cave was always barred.

And one day he was thus engaged when he beheld a chink in the wall, that he had never noted before, and the sun came playfully in; and while he looked he perceived the sunbeam was darkened, and presently he saw a human face peering in through the chink.

And Morven trembled, for he knew he had been watched.

He ran hastily from the cave, but the spy had disappeared among the trees, and Morven went straight to the chamber of Darvan and sat himself down.

Darvan did not return home till late, and he started and turned pale when he saw Morven.

But Morven greeted him as a brother, and bade him to a feast, which, for the first time, he purposed giving at the full of the moon, in honor of the stars.

And going out of Darvan's chamber, he returned to his wife, and bade her rend her hair, and go at the dawn of day to the king, her brother, and complain bitterly of Morven's treatment, and pluck the black schemes from the breast of the king. "For surely," said he, "Darvan hath lied to thy brother, and some evil awaits me that I would fain know."

So the next morning Orna sought the king, and she said:

"The herdsman's son hath reviled me, and spoken harsh words to me; shall I not be avenged?"

Then the king stamped his feet and shook his mighty sword.

"Surely thou shalt be avenged, for I have learned from one of the elders that which convinceth me that the man hath lied to the people, and the base-born shall surely die.

"Yea, the first time that he goeth alone into the forest my brother and I will fall upon him and smite him to the death."

And with this comfort Siror dismissed Orna.

And Orna flung herself at the feet of her husband.

"Fly now, O my beloved!—fly into the forests afar from my brethren, or surely the sword of Siror will end thy days."

Then the son of Osslah folded his arms, and seemed buried in black thoughts; nor did he heed the voice of Orna, until again and again she had implored him to fly.

"Fly!" he said at length. "Nay, I was doubting what punishment the stars should pour down upon our foe. Let warriors fly. Morven, the prophet, conquers by arms mightier than the sword."

Nevertheless Morven was perplexed in his mind, and knew not how to save himself from the vengeance of the king.

Now, while he was musing hopelessly, he heard a roar of waters; and behold the river, for it was now the end of autumn, had burst its bounds, and was rushing along the valley to the houses of the city.

And now the men of the tribe, and the women, and the children, came running, and with shrieks to Morven's house, crying:

"Behold the river has burst upon us!--Save us, O ruler of the stars!"

Then the sudden thought broke upon Morven, and he resolved to risk his fate upon one desperate scheme.

And he came out from the house calm and sad, and he said:

"Ye know not what ye ask; I cannot save ye from this peril: ye have brought it on yourselves."

And they cried: "How? O son of Osslah!—we are ignorant of our crime."

And he answered:

"Go down to the king's palace and wait before it, and surely I will follow ye, and ye shall learn wherefore ye have incurred this punishment from the gods."

Then the crowd rolled murmuring back, as a receding sea; and when it was gone from the

place, Morven went alone to the house of Darvan, which was next his own: and Darvan was greatly terrified, for he was of a great age, and had no children, neither friends, and he feared that he could not of himself escape the waters.

And Morven said to him, soothingly:

"Lo, the people love me, and I will see that thou art saved; for verily thou hast been friendly to me, and done me much service with the king."

And as he thus spake, Morven opened the door of the house and looked forth, and saw that they were quite alone; then he seized the old man by the throat, and ceased not his grip till he was quite dead.

And leaving the body of the elder on the floor, Morven stole from the house and shut the gate.

And as he was going to his cave he mused a little while, when, hearing the mighty roar of the waves advancing, and afar off the shrieks of women, he lifted up his head, and said proudly:

"No! in this hour terror alone shall be my slave; I will use no art save the power of my soul."

So, leaning on his pine staff, he strode down to the palace.

And it was now evening, and many of the men held torches, that they might see each other's faces in the universal fear.

Red flashed the quivering flames on the dark robes and pale front of Morven; and he seemed

mightier than the rest, because his face alone was calm amidst the tumult.

And louder and hoarser came the roar of the waters; and swift rushed the shades of night over the hastening tide.

And Morven said in a stern voice:

"Where is the king; and wherefore is he absent from his people in the hour of dread?"

Then the gate of the palace opened; and, behold, Siror was sitting in the hall by the vast pine-fire, and his brother by his side, and his chiefs around him: for they would not deign to come amongst the crowd at the bidding of the herdsman's son.

Then Morven, standing upon a rock above the heads of the people (the same rock whereon he had proclaimed the king), thus spake:

"Ye desired to know, O sons of Oestrich! wherefore the river hath burst its bounds, and the peril hath come upon you.

"Learn, then, that the stars resent as the foulest of human crimes an insult to their servants and delegates below.

"Ye are all aware of the manner of life of Morven, whom ye have surnamed the Prophet!

"He harms not man or beast; he lives alone; and, far from the wild joys of the warrior tribe, he worships in awe and fear the Powers of Night!

"So is he able to advise ye of the coming dan-

ger—so is he able to save ye from the foe. Thus are your huntsmen swift and your warriors bold; and thus do your cattle bring forth their young, and the earth its fruits.

"What think ye, and what do ye ask to hear?

"Listen, men of Oestrich!—they have laid snares for my life; and there are amongst you those who have whetted the sword against the bosom that is only filled with love for you.

"Therefore have the stern lords of heaven loosened the chains of the river—therefore doth this evil menace ye.

"Neither will it pass away until they who dig the pit for the servant of the stars are buried in the same."

Then, by the red torches, the faces of the men looked fierce and threatening; and ten thousand voices shouted forth:

"Name them who conspired against thy life, O holy prophet! and surely they shall be torn limb from limb."

And Morven turned aside, and they saw that he wept bitterly; and he said:

"Ye have asked me, and I have answered: but now scarce will ye believe the foe that I have provoked against me; and by the heavens themselves I swear, that if my death would satisfy their fury, nor bring down upon yourselves, and your children's children, the anger of the throned stars,

gladly would I give my bosom to the knife. Yes," he cried, lifting up his voice, and pointing his shadowy arm towards the hall where the king sat by the pine-fire—"yes, thou whom by my voice the stars chose above thy brother—yes, Siror, the guilty one! take thy sword, and come hither—strike, if thou hast the heart to strike, the Prophet of the Gods!"

The king started to his feet, and the crowd were hushed in a shuddering silence.

Morven resumed:

"Know then, O men of Oestrich, that Siror and Voltoch, his brother, and Darvan, the elder of the wise men, have purposed to slay your prophet, even at such hour as when alone he seeks the shade of the forest to devise new benefits for you. Let the king deny it, if he can!"

Then Voltoch, of the giant limbs, strode forth from the hall, and his spear quivered in his hand.

"Rightly hast thou spoken, base son of my father's herdsman! and for thy sins shalt thou surely die; for thou liest when thou speakest of thy power with the stars, and thou laughest at the folly of them who hear thee: wherefore put him to death."

Then the chiefs in the hall clashed their arms, and rushed forth to slay the son of Osslah.

But he, stretching his unarmed hands on high, exclaimed:

"Hear him, O dread ones of the night—hark how he blasphemeth."

Then the crowd took up the word, and cried:

"He blasphemeth—he blasphemeth against the prophet!"

But the king and the chiefs who hated Morven, because of his power with the people, rushed into the crowd; and the crowd were irresolute, nor knew they how to act, for never yet had they rebelled against their chiefs, and they feared alike the prophet and the king.

And Siror cried:

"Summon Darvan to us, for he hath watched the steps of Morven, and he shall lift the veil from my people's eyes."

Then three of the swift of foot started forth to the house of Darvan.

And Morven cried out with a loud voice:

"Hark! thus saith the star who, now riding through yonder cloud, breaks forth upon my eyes —'For the lie that the elder hath uttered against my servant, the curse of the stars shall fall upon him.' Seek, and as ye find him, so may ye find ever the foes of Morven and the gods."

A chill and an icy fear fell over the crowd, and even the cheek of Siror grew pale; and Morven, erect and dark above the waving torches, stood motionless with folded arms.

And hark—far and fast came on the war-steeds

of the wave — the people heard them marching to the land, and tossing their white manes in the roaring wind.

"Lo, as ye listen," said Morven, calmly, "the river sweeps on. Haste, for the gods will have a victim, be it your prophet or your king."

"Slave!" shouted Siror, and his spear left his hand, and far above the heads of the crowd sped hissing beside the dark form of Morven, and rent the trunk of the oak behind.

Then the people, wroth at the danger of their beloved seer, uttered a wild yell, and gathered round him with brandished swords, facing their chieftains and their king.

But at that instant, ere the war had broken forth among the tribe, the three warriors returned, and they bore Darvan on their shoulders, and laid him at the feet of the king, and they said tremblingly:

"Thus found we the elder in the centre of his own hall."

And the people saw that Darvan was a corpse, and that the prediction of Morven was thus verified.

"So perish the enemies of Morven and the Stars!" cried the son of Osslah. And the people echoed the cry.

Then the fury of Siror was at its height, and waving his sword above his head, he plunged into the crowd:

"Thy blood, base-born, or mine."

"So be it!" answered Morven, quailing not. "People, smite the blasphemer. Hark how the river pours down upon your children and your hearths. On, on, or ye perish!"

And Siror fell, pierced by five hundred spears.

"Smite! smite!" cried Morven, as the chiefs of the royal house gathered round the king.

And the clash of swords, and the gleam of spears, and the cries of the dying, and the yell of the trampling people, mingled with the roar of the elements, and the voices of the rushing wave.

Three hundred of the chiefs perished that night by the swords of their own tribe. And the last cry of the victors was, "*Morven the prophet*—MORVEN THE KING!"

And the son of Osslah, seeing the waves now spreading over the valley, led Orna his wife, and the men of Oestrich, their women and their children, to a high mount, where they waited the dawning sun.

But Orna sat apart and wept bitterly, for her brothers were no more, and her race had perished from the earth.

And Morven sought to comfort her in vain.

When the morning rose, they saw that the river had overspread the greater part of the city, and now stayed its course among the hollows of the vale.

Then Morven said to the people: "The star-

Awaiting the Subsidence of the Waters (*Page 51.*)

kings are avenged, and their wrath appeased. Tarry only here until the waters have melted into the crevices of the soil."

And on the fourth day they returned to the city, and no man dared to name another, save Morven, as the king.

But Morven retired into his cave and mused deeply; and then assembling the people, he gave them new laws; and he made them build a mighty temple in honor of the stars, and made them heap within it all that the tribe held most precious.

And he took unto him fifty children from the most famous of the tribe; and he took also ten from among the men who had served him best, and he ordained that they should serve the stars in the great temple: and Morven was their chief.

And he put away the crown they pressed upon him, and he chose from among the elders a new king.

And he ordained that henceforth the servants only of the stars in the great temple should elect the king and the rulers, and hold council, and proclaim war: but he suffered the king to feast, and to hunt, and to make merry in the banquet-halls.

And Morven built altars in the temple, and was the first who, in the North, *sacrificed the beast and the bird, and afterwards human flesh*, upon the altars.

And he drew auguries from the entrails of the victim, and made schools for the science of the prophet; and Morven's piety was the wonder of the tribe, in that he refused to be a king.

And Morven, the high-priest, was *ten thousand times mightier than the king.*

He taught the people to till the ground, and to sow the herb; and by his wisdom, and the valor that his prophecies instilled into men, he conquered all the neighboring tribes.

And the sons of Oestrich spread themselves over a mighty empire, and with them spread the name and the laws of Morven.

And in every province which he conquered, he ordered them to build a temple to the stars.

But a heavy sorrow fell upon the years of Morven.

The sister of Siror bowed down her head and survived not long the slaughter of her race.

And she left Morven childless.

And he mourned bitterly and as one distraught, for her only in the world had his heart the power to love.

And he sat down and covered his face, saying:

"Lo: I have conquered and travailed; and never before in the world did man conquer what I have conquered.

"Verily, the empire of the iron thews and the giant limbs is no more; I have found a new power,

Death and Burial of Orna. (*Page 52.*)

that henceforth shall sway the lands;—*the empire of a plotting brain and a commanding mind.*

"But, behold, my fate is barren, and I feel already that it will grow neither fruit nor tree as a shelter to mine old age.

"Desolate and lonely shall I pass away unto my grave.

"O Orna! my beautiful! my loved! none were like unto thee, and to thy love do I owe my glory and my life.

"Would for thy sake, O sweet bird! that nestled in the dark cavern of my heart—would for thy sake that thy brethren had been spared, for verily with my life would I have purchased thine.

"Alas! only when I lost thee did I find that thy love was dearer to me than the fear of others."

And Morven mourned night and day, and none might comfort him.

But from that time forth he gave himself solely up to the cares of his calling; and his nature and his affections, and whatever there was left soft in him, grew hard like stone; and he was a man without love, *and he forbade love and marriage to the priest.*

Now, in his latter years, there arose OTHER prophets; for the world had grown wiser even by Morven's wisdom, and some did say unto themselves:

"Behold Morven, the herdsman's son, is a king

of kings: this did the stars for their servant; shall we not, therefore, be also servants to the star?"

And they wore black garments like Morven, and went about prophesying of what the stars foretold them.

And Morven was exceeding wroth; for he, more than other men, knew that the prophets lied; wherefore he went forth against them with the ministers of the temple, and he took them and burned them by a slow fire: for thus said Morven to the people:

"*A true prophet hath honor, but I only am a true prophet!*

"To all false prophets there shall be surely death."

And the people applauded the piety of the son of Osslah.

And Morven educated the wisest of the children in the mysteries of the temple, so that they grew up to succeed him worthily.

And he died full of years and honor; and they carved his effigy on a mighty stone before the temple, and the effigy endured for a thousand ages, and whoso looked on it trembled; for the face was calm with the calmness of unspeakable awe!

And Morven was the first mortal of the North that made *Religion the stepping stone to Power.*

Of a surety Morven was a great man!

Morven Burning the "False Prophets."

"A true prophet hath honor, but I only am a true prophet." (*Page 54.*)

CONCLUSION.

IT was the last night of the old year, and the stars sat, each upon his ruby throne, and watched with sleepless eyes upon the world. The night was dark and troubled, the dread winds were abroad, and fast and frequent hurried the clouds beneath the thrones of the kings of night.

But ever and anon fiery meteors flashed along the depths of heaven, and were again swallowed up in the graves of darkness.

And far below his brethren, and with a lurid haze around his orb, sat the discontented star that had watched over the hunters of the North.

And on the lowest abyss of space there was spread a thick and mighty gloom, from which, as from a caldron, rose columns of wreathing smoke; and still, when the great winds rested for an instant on their paths, voices of woe and laughter, mingled with shrieks, were heard booming from the abyss to the upper air.

And now, in the middest night, a vast figure rose slowly from the abyss, and its wings threw blackness over the world. High upward to the

throne of the discontented star sailed the fearful shape, and the star trembled on his throne when the form stood before him face to face. And the shape said: "Hail, brother!—all hail!"

"I know thee not," answered the star: "thou art not the archangel that visitests the kings of night."

And the shape laughed loud. "I am the fallen star of the morning.—I am Lucifer, thy brother. Hast thou not, O sullen king, served me and mine? and hast thou not wrested the earth from thy Lord who sittest above and given it to me by *darkening the souls of men with the religion of fear?* Wherefore come, brother, come;—thou hast a throne prepared beside my own in the fiery gloom. Come.—The heavens are no more for thee." Then the star rose from his throne, and descended to the side of Lucifer. For ever hath the spirit of discontent had sympathy with the soul of pride. And slowly they sank down to the gulf of gloom.

It was the first night of the new year, and the stars sat each on his ruby throne, and watched with sleepless eyes upon the world. But sorrow dimmed the bright faces of the kings of night, for they mourned in silence and in fear for a fallen brother.

And the gates of the heaven of heavens flew open with a golden sound, and the swift archangel fled down on his silent wings; and the archangel gave to each of the stars, as before, the message of

his Lord; and to each star was his appointed charge.

And when the heraldry seemed done, there came a laugh from the abyss of gloom, and half way from the gulf rose the lurid shape of Lucifer, the fiend.

"Thou countest thy flock ill, O radiant shepherd. Behold! one star is missing from the three thousand and ten."

"Back to thy gulf, false Lucifer! — the throne of thy brother hath been filled."

And lo! as the archangel spake, the stars beheld a young and all-lustrous stranger on the throne of the erring star; and his face was so soft to look upon, that the dimmest of human eyes might have gazed upon its splendor unabashed; but the dark fiend alone was dazzled by its lustre, and, with a yell that shook the flaming pillars of the universe, he plunged backwards into the gloom.

Then, far and sweet from the arch unseen, came forth the voice of God:

"Behold! *on the throne of the discontented star sits the star of hope; and he that breathed into mankind the Religion of Fear hath a successor in him who shall teach earth the Religion of Love.*"

And evermore the Star of Fear dwells with Lucifer, and the Star of Love keeps vigil in heaven.

ON THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

By LORD BROUGHAM.

DISSERTATION ON THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

THE question which has more than any other harassed metaphysical reasoners, but especially theologians, and upon which it is probable that no very satisfactory conclusion will ever be reached by the human faculties, is the Origin and Sufferance of Evil.

Its existence being always assumed, philosophers have formed various theories for explaining it, but they have always drawn very different inferences from it.

The ancient Epicureans argued against the existence of the Deity, because they held that the existence of Evil either proved him to be limited in power or of a malignant nature; either of which imperfections is inconsistent with the first notions of a divine being.

In this kind of reasoning they have been followed both by the atheists and sceptics of later times.

Bayle regarded the subject of evil as one of the great arsenals from whence his weapons were to be chiefly drawn. None of the articles in his

famous Dictionary are more labored than those in which he treats of this subject. *Monichian*, and still more *Paulician*, almost assume the appearance of formal treatises upon the question; and both *Marchionite* and *Zoroaster* treat of the same subject. All these articles are of considerable value; they contain the greater part of the learning upon the question; and they are distinguished by the acuteness of reasoning which was the other characteristic of their celebrated author.

Those ancient philosophers who did not agree with Epicurus in arguing from the existence of evil against the existence of a providence that superintended and influenced the destinies of the world, were put to no little difficulty in accounting for the fact which they did not deny, and yet maintaining the power of a divine ruler. The doctrine of a double principle, or of two divine beings of opposite natures, one beneficent, the other mischievous, was the solution which one class of reasoners deemed satisfactory, and to which they held themselves driven by the phenomena of the universe.

Others unable to deny the existence of things which men denominate evil, both physical and moral, explain them in a different way. They maintained that physical evil only obtains the name from our imperfect and vicious or feeble dispositions; that to a wise man there is no such

thing; that we may rise superior to all such groveling notions as make us dread or repine at any events which can befall the body; that pain, sickness, loss of fortune or of reputation, exile, death itself, are only accounted ills by a weak and pampered mind; that if we find the world tiresome, or woeful, or displeasing, we may at any moment quit it; and that therefore we have no right whatever to call any suffering connected with existence on earth an evil, because almost all sufferings can be borne by a patient and firm mind; since if the situation we are placed in becomes either intolerable, or upon the whole more painful than agreeable, it is our own fault that we remain in it.

But these philosophers took a further view of the question which especially applied to moral evil. They considered that nothing could be more groundless than to suppose that if there were no evil there could be any good in the world; and they illustrated this position by asking how we could know anything of temperance, fortitude or justice, unless there were such things as excess, cowardice and injustice.

These were the doctrines of the Stoics, from whose sublime and impracticable philosophy they seemed naturally enough to flow. Aulus Gellius relates that the last-mentioned argument was expounded by Chrysippus, in his work upon provi-

dence. The answer given by Plutarch seems quite sufficient: "As well might you say that Achilles could not have a fine head of hair unless Thersites had been bald; or that one man's limbs could not be all sound if another had not the gout."

In truth, the Stoical doctrine proceeds upon the assumption that all virtue is only the negative of vice; and is as absurd, if indeed it be not the very same absurdity, as the doctrine which should deny the existence of affirmative or positive truths, resolving them all into the opposite of negative propositions. Indeed, if we even were to admit this as an abstract position, the actual existence of evil would still be unnecessary to the idea, and still more to the existence, of good. For the conception of evil, the bare idea of its possibility, would be quite sufficient, and there would be no occasion for a single example of it.

The other doctrine, that of two opposite principles, was embraced by most of the other sects, as it should seem, at some period or other of their inquiries. Plato himself, in his later works, was clearly a supporter of the system; for he held that there were at least two principles, a good and an evil; to which he added a third, the moderator or mediator between them.

Whether this doctrine was, like many others, imported into Greece from the East, or was the natural growth of the schools, we cannot ascertain.

Certain it is that the Greeks themselves believed it to have been taught by Zoroaster in Asia, at least five centuries before the Trojan war; so that it had an existence there long before the name of philosophy was known in the western world.

Zoroaster's doctrine agreed in every respect with Plato's; for besides Oomazes, the good, and Arimanius, the evil principle, he taught that there was a third, or mediatory one, called Mithras. That it never became any part of the popular belief in Greece or Italy is quite clear. All the polytheism of those countries recognized each of the gods as authors alike of good and evil. Nor did even the chief of the divinities, under whose power the rest were placed, offer any exception to the general rule; for Jupiter not only gave good from one urn and ill from another, but he was also, according to the barbarous mythology of classical antiquity, himself a model at once of human perfections and of human vices.

After the light of the Christian religion had made some way toward supplanting the ancient polytheism, the doctrine of two principles was broached; first by Marcion, who lived in the time of Adrian and Antonius Pius, early in the second century; and next by Manes, a hundred years later. He was a Persian slave, who was brought into Greece, where he taught this doctrine, since known by his name, having learned it, as is said,

from Scythianus, an Arabian. The Manichean doctrines, afterwards called also Paulician, from a great teacher of them in the seventh century, were like almost all the heresies in the primitive church, soon mixed up with gross impurities of sacred rites as well as extravagant absurdities of creed.

The Manicheans were, probably as much on this account as from the spirit of religious intolerance, early the objects of severe persecution; and the Code of Justinian itself denounces capital punishment against any of the sect, if found within the Roman dominions.

It must be confessed that the theory of two principles, when kept free from the absurdities and impurities which were introduced into the Manichean doctrine, is not unnaturally adopted by men who have no aid from the light of revelation,* and who are confounded by the appearance of a world where evil and good are mixed together, or seem to struggle with one another, sometimes the one prevailing, and sometimes the other; and accordingly, in all countries, in the most barbarous nations, as well as among the most refined, we find plain traces of reflecting men having been driven to this solution of the difficulty.

It seems upon a superficial view to be very easily deducible from the phenomena; and as the

*The "light of revelation," as well as the "light of the Christian religion," has not dispelled the darkness of ignorance. The torch of reason is a surer guide.—*Pub.*

idea of infinite power, with which it is manifestly inconsistent, does by no means so naturally present itself to the mind, as long as only a very great degree of power, a power which in comparison of all human force may be termed infinite, is the attribute with which the Deity is believed to be endued. Manichean hypothesis is by no means so easily refuted. That the power of the Deity was supposed to have limits even in the systems of the most enlightened heathens is unquestionable. They, generally speaking, believed in the eternity of matter, and conceived some of its qualities to be so essentially necessary to its existence that no divine agency could alter them. They ascribed to the Deity a plastic power, a power not of creating or annihilating, but only of moulding, disposing and moving matter. So over mind they generally give him the like power, considering it as a kind of emanation from his own greater mind or essence, and destined to be re-united with him hereafter. Nay, over all the gods, and of superior potency to any, they conceived fate to preside; an overruling and paramount necessity, of which they formed some dark conceptions, and to which the chief of all the gods was supposed to submit.

It is, indeed, extremely difficult to state precisely what the philosophic theory of theology was in Greece and Rome, because the wide difference between the esoteric and exoteric doctrines, be-

tween the belief of the learned few and the popular superstition, makes it very difficult to avoid confounding the two, and lending to the former some of the grosser errors with which the latter abounded. Nevertheless, we may rely upon what has been just stated, as conveying, generally speaking, the opinion of philosophers, although some sects certainly had a still more scanty measure of belief.

But we shall presently find that in the speculation of the much more enlightened moderns, Christians of course, errors of a like kind are to be traced. They constantly argue the great question of evil upon a latent assumption, that the power of the Deity is restricted by some powers or qualities inherent in matter; notions analogous to that of faith are occasionally perceptible; not stated or expanded indeed into propositions, but influencing the course of the reasoning; while the belief of infinite attributes is never kept steadily in view, except when it is called in as requisite to refute the Manichean doctrines. Some observers of the controversy have indeed not scrupled to affirm that those of whom we speak are really Manicheans without knowing it; and build their systems upon assumptions secretly borrowed from the disciples of Zoroaster, without ever stating those assumptions openly in the form of postulates or definition.

The refutation of the Manichean hypothesis is extremely easy if we be permitted to assume that both the principles which it supposes are either of infinite power or of equal power. If they are of infinite power, the supposition of their co-existence involves a contradiction in terms; for the one being in opposition to the other, the power of each must be something taken from that of the other; consequently neither can be of infinite power. If, again, we only suppose both to be of equal power, and always acting against each other, there could be nothing whatever done, neither good or evil; the universe would be at a standstill; or rather no act of creation could ever have been performed, and no existence could be conceived beyond that of the two antagonistic principles.

Archbishop Tillotson's argument, properly speaking, amounts to this last proposition, and is applicable to equal and opposite principles, although he applies it to two beings, both infinitely powerful and counteracting one another. When he says they would tie up each other's hands, he might apply this argument to such antagonistic principles if only equal, although not infinitely powerful. The hypothesis of their being both infinitely powerful needs no such refutation; it is a contradiction in terms. But it must be recollected that the advocates of the Manichean doctrine endeavor to guard themselves against the attack by

contending, that the conflict between the two principles ends in a kind of compromise, so that neither has it all his own way; there is a mixture of evil admitted by the good principle, because else the whole would be at a standstill; while there is much good admitted by the evil principle, else nothing, either good or evil, would be done. Another answer is therefore required to this theory than what Tillotson and his followers have given.

First, we must observe that this reasoning of the Manicheans proceeds upon the analogy of what we see in mortal contentions; where neither party having the power to defeat the other, each is content to yield a little to his adversary, and so, by mutual concession, both are successful to some extent, and both to some extent disappointed. But in a speculation concerning the nature of the Deity, there seems no place for such notions.

Secondly, the equality of power is not an arbitrary assumption; it seems to follow from the existence of the two opposing principles. For if they are independent of one another as to existence, which they must needs be, else one would immediately destroy the other, so must they also, in each particular instance, be independent of each other, and also equal each to the other, else one would have the mastery, and the influence of the other could not be perceived. To say that in some things the good principle prevails and in others

the evil, is really saying nothing more than that good exists here and evil there. It does not further the argument one step, nor give anything like an explanation. For it must always be borne in mind that the whole question respecting the Origin of Evil proceeds upon the assumption of a wise, benevolent and powerful Being having created the world. The difficulty, and the only difficulty, is, how to reconcile existing evil with such a Being's attributes; and if the Manichean only explains this by saying the good Being did what is good, and another and evil Being did what is bad in the universe, he really tells us nothing more than the fact; he does not apply his explanation to the difficulty; and he supposes the existence of a second Deity gratuitously and to no kind of purpose.

But, *thirdly*, in whatever light we view the hypothesis, it seems exposed to a similar objection, namely, of explaining nothing in its application, while it is wholly gratuitous in itself. It assumes, of course, that creation was the act of the good Being; and it also assumes that Being's goodness to have been perfect, though his power is limited. Then as he must have known the existence of the evil principle and foreseen the certainty of misery being occasioned by his existence, why did he voluntarily create sentient beings, to put them, in some respects at least, under the evil

one's power, and thus be exposed to suffering? The good Being, according to this theory, is the remote cause of the evil which is endured, because but for his act of creation the evil Being could have had no subjects whereon to work mischief; so that the hypothesis wholly fails in removing, by more than one step, the difficulty which it was invented to solve.

Fourthly, there is no advantage gained to the argument by supposing two Beings, rather than one Being of a mixed nature. The facts lead to this supposition just as naturally as to the hypothesis of two principles. The existence of the evil Being is as much a detraction from the power of the good one, as if we only at once suppose the latter to be of limited power, and that he prefers making and supporting creatures who suffer much less than they enjoy, to making no creatures at all. The supposition that he made them as happy as he could, and that not being able to make them less miserable, he yet perceived that upon the whole their existence would occasion more happiness than if they never had any being at all, will just account for the phenomena as well as the Manichean theory, and will as little as that theory assume any malevolence in the power which created and preserved the universe. If, however, it be objected that this hypothesis leaves unexplained the fetters upon the good Being's power,

the answer is obvious; it leaves those fetters not at all less explained than the Manichean theory does; for that theory gives no explanation of the existence of a counteracting principle, and it assumes both an antagonistic power to limit the Deity's power, and a malevolent principle to set the antagonistic power in motion; whereas our supposition assumes no malevolence at all, but only a restraint upon the divine power.

Fifthly, this leads us to another and most formidable objection. To conceive the eternal existence of one Being infinite in power, self-created and creating all others, is by no means impossible. Indeed, as everything must have had a cause, nothing we see being by possibility self-created, we naturally mount from particulars to generals, until finally we rise to the idea of a first cause, uncreated, and self-existing, and eternal. If the phenomena compels us to affix limits to his goodness, we find it impossible to conceive limits to the power of a creative, eternal, self-existing principle. But even supposing we could form the conception of such a Being having his power limited as well as his goodness, still we can conceive no second Being independent of him. This would necessarily lead to the supposition of some third Being, above and antecedent to both, and the creator of both — the real first cause — and then the whole question would be to solve over again, — Why

these two antagonistic Beings were suffered to exist by the great Being of all?

The Manichean doctrine, then, is exposed to every objection to which a theory can be obnoxious. It is gratuitous; it is inapplicable to the facts; it supposes more causes than are necessary; it fails to explain the phenomena, leaving the difficulties exactly where it found them. Nevertheless, such is the theory, how easily soever refuted when openly avowed and explicitly stated, which in various disguises appears to pervade the explanations, given of the facts by most of the other systems; nay, to form, secretly and unacknowledged, their principal ground-work. For it really makes very little difference in the matter whether we are to account for evil by holding that the Deity has created as much happiness as was consistent with "the nature of things," and has taken every means of avoiding all evil except "where it necessarily existed;" or at once give those limiting influences a separate and independent existence, and call them by a name of their own, which is the Manichean hypothesis.

The most remarkable argument on this subject, and the most distinguished both for its clear and well ordered statement, and for the systematic shape which it assumes, is that of Archbishop King. It is the great text-book of those who study this subject; and like the famous legal work of

Littleton, it has found an expounder yet abler and more learned than the author himself. Bishop Law's commentary is full of information, of reasoning and of explication; nor can we easily find anything valuable upon the subject which is not contained in the volumes of that work. It will, however, only require a slight examination of the doctrines maintained by these learned and pious men, to satisfy us that they all along either assume the thing to be proved, or proceed upon suppositions quite inconsistent with the infinite power of the Deity—the only position which raises a question, and which makes the difficulty that requires to be solved.

According to all the systems as well as this one, evil is of two kinds—physical and moral. To the former class belong all the sufferings to which sentient beings are exposed from the qualities and affections of matter independent of their own acts; the latter class consists of the sufferings of whatever kind which arise from their own conduct. This division of the subject, however, is liable to one serious objection; it comprehends under the second head a class of evils which ought more properly to be ranged under the first. Nor is this a mere question of classification: it affects the whole scope of the argument. The second of the above-mentioned classes comprehends both the physical evils which human agency causes, but

which it would have no power to cause unless the qualities of matter were such as to produce pain, privation and death; and also the moral evil of guilt which may possibly exist independent of material agency, but which, whether independent or not upon that physical action, is quite separable from it, residing wholly in the mind. Thus a person who destroys the life of another produces physical evil by means of the constitution of matter, and moral evil is the source of his wicked action. The true arrangement then is this: Physical evil is that which depends on the constitution of matter, or only is so far connected with the constitution of mind as that the nature and existence of a sentient being must be assumed in order to its mischief being felt. And this physical evil is of two kinds; that which originates in human action, and that which is independent of human action, befalling us from the unalterable course of nature. Of the former class are the pains, privations and destruction inflicted by men one upon another; of the latter class are diseases, old age and death. Moral evil consists in the crimes, whether of commission or omission, which men are guilty of—including under the latter head those sufferings which we endure from ill-regulated minds through want of fortitude or self-control. It is clear that as far as the question of the origin of evil is concerned, the first of these two classes,

physical evil, depends upon the properties of matter, and the last upon those of mind. The second as well as the first subdivision of the physical class depends upon matter; because, however ill-disposed the agent's mind may be, he could inflict the mischief only in consequence of the constitution of matter. Therefore, the Being who created matter enabled him to perpetrate the evil, even admitting that this Being did not by creating the mind also give rise to the evil disposition; and admitting that, as far as regards this disposition it has the same origin with the evil of the second class, or moral evil, the acts of a rational agent.

It is quite true that many reasoners refuse to allow any distinction between the evil produced by natural causes and the evils caused by rational agents, whether as regards their own guilt, or the mischief it caused to others. Those reasoners deny that the creation of man's will and the endowing it with liberty explains anything; they hold that the creation of a mind whose will is to do evil, amounts to the same thing, and belongs to the same class, with the creation of matter whose nature is to give pain and misery. But this position, which involves the doctrine of necessity, must, at the very least, admit of one modification. Where no human agency whatever is interposed, and the calamity comes without any one being to blame for it, the mischief seems a step, and a

large step, nearer the creative or the superintending cause, because it is, as far as men go, altogether inevitable. The main tendency of the argument, therefore, is confined to physical evil; and this has always been found the most difficult to account for, that is to reconcile with the government of a perfectly good and powerful Being. It would indeed be very easily explained, and the reconcilement would be readily made, if we were at liberty to suppose matter independent in its existence, and in certain qualities, of the divine control; but this would be to suppose the Deity's power limited and imperfect, which is just one horn of the Epicurean dilemma, "*Aut vult et non potest;*" and in assuming this, we do not so much beg the question as wholly give it up and admit we cannot solve the difficulty. Yet obvious as this is, we shall presently see that the reasoners who have undertaken the solution, and especially King and Law, under such phrases as "the nature of things," and "the laws of the material universe," have been constantly, through the whole argument, guilty of this *petitio principii* (begging the question), or rather this abandonment of the whole question, and never more so than at the very moment when they complacently plumed themselves upon having overcome the difficulty.

Having premised these observations for the purpose of clearing the ground and avoiding confusion

in the argument, we may now consider that Archbishop King's theory is in both its parts; for there are in truth two distinct explanations, the one resembling an argument *a priori*, the other an argument *a posteriori*. It is, however, not a little remarkable that Bishop Law, in the admirable abstract or analysis which he gives of the Archbishop's treatise at the end of his preface, begins with the second branch, omitting all mention of the first, as if he considered it to be merely introductory matter; and yet his fourteenth note (t. cap. 1. s. 3.) shows that he was aware of its being an argument wholly independent of the rest of the reasonings; for he there says that the author had given one demonstration *a priori*, and that no difficulties raised by an examination of the phenomena, no objection *a posteriori*, ought to overrule it, unless these difficulties are equally certain and clear with the demonstration, and admit of no solution consistent with that demonstration.

The necessity of a first cause being shown, and it being evident that therefore this cause is uncreated and self-existent, and independent of any other, the conclusion is next drawn that its power must be infinite. This is shown by the consideration that there is no other antecedent cause, and no other principle which was not created by the first cause, and consequently which was not of inferior power; therefore, there is nothing which

can limit the power of the first cause; and there being no limiter or restrainer, there can be no limitation or restriction.

Again, the infinity of the Deity's power is attempted to be proved in another way.

The number of possible things is infinite; but every possibility implies a power to do the possible thing; and as one possible thing implies a power to do it, an infinite number of possible things implies an infinite power. Or as Descartes and his followers put it, we can have no idea of anything that has not either an actual or a possible existence; but we have an idea of a Being of infinite perfection; therefore, he must actually exist; for otherwise there would be one perfection wanting, and so he would not be infinite, which he either is actually or possibly. It is needless to remark that this whole argument, whatever may be said of the former one, is a pure fallacy, and a *petitio principii* throughout. The Cartesian form of it is the most glaringly fallacious, and indeed exposes itself; for by that reasoning we might prove the existence of a fiery dragon or any other phantom of the brain. But even King's more concealed sophism is equally absurd. What ground is there for saying that the number of possible things is infinite? He adds, "at least in power," which means either nothing or only that we have the power of conceiving an infinite number of possibilities. But

because we can conceive or fancy an infinity of possibilities, does it follow that there actually exists this infinity? The whole argument is unworthy of a moment's consideration. The other is more plausible, that restriction implies a restraining power. But even this is not satisfactory when closely examined. For although the first cause must be self-existent and of eternal duration, we only are driven by the necessity of supposing a cause whereon all the argument rests, to suppose one capable of causing all that actually exists; and, therefore, to extend this inference and suppose that the cause is of infinite power seems gratuitous. Nor is it necessary to suppose another power limiting its efficacy, if we do not find it necessary to suppose its own constitution and essence such as we term infinitely powerful. However, after noticing this manifest defect in the fundamental part of the argument, that which infers infinite power, let us for the present assume the position to be proved either by these or by any other reasons, and see if the structure raised upon it is such as can stand the test of examination.

Thus, then, an infinitely powerful Being exists, and he was the creator of the universe; but to incline him towards the creation there could be no possible motive of happiness to himself, and he must, says King, have either sought his own happiness or that of the universe which he made.

Therefore his own ideas must have been the communication of happiness to the creature. He could only desire to exercise his attributes without, or eternally to himself, which before creating other beings he could not do. But this could only gratify his nature, which wants nothing, being perfect in itself, by communicating his goodness and providing for the happiness of other sentient beings created by him for this purpose. Therefore, says King, "it manifestly follows that the world is as well as it could be made by infinite power and goodness; for since the exercise of the divine power and the communication of his goodness are the ends for which the world is formed, there is no doubt but God has attained these ends." And again, "If then anything inconvenient or incommodious be now, or was from the beginning in it, that certainly could not be hindered or removed even by infinite power, wisdom and goodness."

Now certainly no one can deny, that if God be infinitely powerful and also infinitely good, it must follow that whatever looks like evil, either is not really evil, or that it is such as infinite power could not avoid. This is implied in the very terms of the hypothesis. It may also be admitted that if the Deity's only object in his dispensation be the happiness of his creatures, the same conclusion follows even without assuming his nature to be infinitely good; for we admit what, for the purpose

of the argument, is the same thing, namely, that there entered no evil into his design in creating or maintaining the universe. But all this really assumes the very thing to be proved. King gets over the difficulty and reaches his conclusion by saying, "The Deity could have only one of two objects — his own happiness or that of his creatures." — The skeptic makes answer, "He might have another object, namely, the misery of his creatures;" and then the whole question is, whether or not he had this other object; or, which is the same thing, whether or not his nature is perfectly good. It must never be forgotten that unless evil exists there is nothing to dispute about — the question falls. The whole difficulty arises from the admission that evil exists, or what we call evil, exists. From this we inquire whether or not the author of it can be perfectly benevolent? or if he be, with what view he has created it? This assumes him to be infinitely powerful, or at least powerful enough to have prevented the evil; but indeed we are now arguing with the Archbishop on the supposition that he has proved the Deity to be of infinite power. The skeptic rests upon his dilemma, and either alternative, limited power or limited goodness, satisfies him.

It is quite plain, therefore, that King has assumed the thing to be proved in his first argument, or argument *a priori*. For he proceeds upon

the postulates that the Deity is infinitely good, and that he only had human happiness in view when he made the world. Either supposition would have served his purpose; and making either would have been taking for granted the whole matter in dispute. But he has assumed both; and it must be added, he has made his assumption of both as if he was only laying down a single position. This part of the work is certainly more slovenly than the rest. It is the third section of the first chapter.

It is certainly not from any reluctance to admit the existence of evil that the learned author and his able commentator have been led into this inconclusive course of reasoning. We shall nowhere find more striking expositions of the state of things in this respect, nor more gloomy descriptions of our condition, than in their celebrated work. "Whence so many inaccuracies," says the Archbishop, "in the work of a most good and powerful God? Whence that perpetual war between the very elements, between animals, between men? Whence errors, miseries and vices, the constant companions of human life from its infancy? Whence good to evil men, evil to the good? If we behold anything irregular in the work of men, if any machine serves not the end it was made for, if we find something in it repugnant to itself or others, we attribute that to the

ignorance, impatience or malice of the workman. But since these qualities have no place in God, how come they to have place in anything? Or why does God suffer his works to be deformed by them?"—Chap. ii. s. 3. Bishop Law, in his admirable preface, still more cogently puts the case: "When I inquire how I got into the world, and came to be what I am, I am told that an absolutely perfect being produced me out of nothing, and placed me here on purpose to communicate some part of his happiness to me, and to make me in some manner like himself. This end is not obtained—the direct contrary appears—I find myself surrounded with nothing but perplexity, want and misery—by whose fault I know not—how to better myself I cannot tell. What notions of good and goodness can this afford me? What ideas of religion? What hopes of a future state? For if God's aim in producing me be entirely unknown, if it be either his glory (as some will have it), which my present state is far from advancing, nor mine own good, which the same is equally inconsistent with, how know I what I have to do here, or indeed in what manner I must endeavor to please him? Or why should I endeavor it at all? For if I must be miserable in this world, what security have I that I shall not be so in another too (if there be one), since if it were the will of my Almighty Creator, I might (for aught I see)

have been happy in both."—Pref. viii. The question thus is stated. The difficulty is raised in its full and formidable magnitude by both these learned and able men; that they have signally failed to lay it by the argument *a priori* is plain. Indeed, it seems wholly impossible ever to answer by an argument *a priori* any objection whatever which arises altogether out of the facts made known to us by experience alone, and which are therefore in the nature of contingent truths, resting upon contingent evidence, while all demonstrations *a priori* must necessarily proceed upon mathematical truths. Let us now see if their labors have been more successful in applying to the solution of the difficulty the reasoning *a posteriori*.

Archbishop King divides evil into three kinds —imperfection, natural evil and moral evil—including under the last head all the physical evils that arise from human actions, as well as the evils which consists in the guilt of those actions.

The existence of imperfection is stated to be necessary, because everything which is created and not self-existent must be imperfect; consequently every work of the Deity, in other words, everything but the Deity himself, must have imperfection in its nature. Nor is the existence of some beings which are imperfect any interference with the attributes of others. Nor the existence

of beings with many imperfections any interference with others having pre-eminence. The goodness of the Deity therefore is not impugned by the existence of various orders of created beings more or less approaching to perfection. His creating none at all would have left the universe less admirable and containing less happiness than it now does. Therefore, the act of mere benevolence which called those various orders into existence is not impeached in respect of goodness any more than of power by the variety of the attributes possessed by the different beings created.

He now proceeds to grapple with the real difficulty of the question. And it is truly astonishing to find this acute metaphysician begin with an assumption which entirely begs that question. As imperfection, says he, arises from created beings having been made out of nothing, so natural evils arise "from all natural things having a relation to matter, and on this account being necessarily subject to natural evil." As long as matter is subject to motion, it must be the subject of generation and corruption. "These and all other natural evils," says the author, "are so necessarily connected with the material origin of things that they cannot be separated from it, and thus the structure of the world either ought not to have been formed at all, or these evils must have been tolerated without any imputation on the divine power and

goodness." Again, he says, "corruption could not be avoided without violence done to the laws of motion and the nature of matter." Again, "All manner of inconveniences could not be avoided because of the imperfection of matter and the nature of motion. That state of things were therefore preferable which was attained with the fewest and the least inconveniences." Then follows a kind of menace, "And who but a very rash, indiscreet person will affirm that God has not made choice of this?"—when every one must perceive that the bare propounding of the question concerning evil calls upon us to exercise this temerity and commit this indiscretion.—Chap. iv. s. 1, div. 7. He then goes into more detail as to particular cases of natural evil; but all are handled in the same way. Thus death is explained by saying that the bodies of animals are a kind of vessels which contain fluids in motion, and being broken, the fluids are spilt and the motions cease; "because by the native imperfection of matter it is capable of dissolution, and the spilling and stagnation must necessarily follow, and with it animal life must cease."—Chap. iv. s. 3. Disease is dealt with in like manner. "It could not be avoided unless animals had been made of a quite different frame and constitution."—Chap. iv. s. 7. The whole reasoning is summed up in the concluding section of this part, where the author somewhat

triumphantly says, "The difficult question then, whence comes evil? is not unanswerable. For it arises from the very nature and constitution of created beings, and could not be avoided without a contradiction."—Chap. iv. s. 9. To this the commentary of Bishop Law adds (Note 41), "that natural evil has been shown to be, in every case, unavoidable, without introducing into the system a greater evil."

It is certain that many persons, led away by the authority of a great name, have been accustomed to regard this work as a text-book, and have appealed to Archbishop King and his learned commentator as having solved the question. So many men have referred to the *Principia* as showing the motions of the heavenly bodies, who never read, or indeed could read, a page of that immortal work. But no man ever did open it who could read it and find himself disappointed in any one particular; the whole demonstration is perfect; not a link is wanting; nothing is assumed. How different the case here! We open the work of the prelate and find it from the first to last a chain of gratuitous assumptions, and, of the main point, nothing whatever is either proved or explained. Evil arises, he says, from the nature of matter. Who doubts it? But is not the whole question why matter was created with such properties as of necessity to produce evil? It was impossible, says

he, to avoid it consistently with the laws of motion and matter. Unquestionably; but the whole dispute is upon those laws. If indeed the laws of nature, the existing constitution of the material world, were assumed as necessary, and as binding upon the Deity, how is it possible that any question ever could have been raised? The Deity having the power to make those laws, to endow matter with that constitution, and having also the power to make different laws and to give matter another constitution, the whole question is, how his choosing to create the present existing order of things—the laws and the constitution which we find to prevail—can be reconciled with perfect goodness. The whole argument of the Archbishop assumes that matter and its laws are independent of the Deity; and the only conclusion to which the inquiry leads us is that the Creator has made a world with as little of evil in it as the nature of things—that is, as the laws of nature and matter—allowed him; which is nonsense, if those laws were made by him, and leaves the question where it was, or rather solves it by giving up the omnipotence of the Creator, if these laws were binding upon him.

It must be added, however, that Dr. King and Dr. Law are not singular in pursuing this most inconclusive course of reasoning.

Thus Dr. J. Clarke, in his treatise on natural

evil, quoted by Bishop Law (Note 32), shows how mischiefs arise from the laws of matter; and says this could not be avoided "without altering those primary laws, i. e., making it something else than what it is, or changing it into another form; the result of which would only be to render it liable to evils of another kind against which the same objections would equally lie." So Dr. J. Burnett, in his discourses on evil, at the Boyle Lecture (vol. ii. p. 201), conceives that he explains death by saying that the materials of which the body is composed "cannot last beyond seventy years, or thereabouts, and it was originally intended that we should die at that age." Pain, too, he imagines is accounted for by observing that we are endowed with feelings, and that if we could not feel pain, so neither could we pleasure (p. 202). Again, he says that there are certain qualities which "in the nature of things matter is incapable of" (p. 207). And as if he really felt the pressure of this difficulty, he at length comes to this conclusion, that life is a free gift, which we had no right to exact, and which the Deity lay under no necessity to grant, and therefore we must take it with the conditions annexed (p. 210); which is undeniably true, but is excluding the discussion and not answering the question proposed. Nor must it be forgotten that some reasoners deal strangely with the facts. Thus Derham, in his *Physico-Theology*,

explaining the use of poison in snakes, first desires us to bear in mind that many venomous ones are of use medicinally in stubborn diseases, which is not true, and if it were, would prove nothing, unless the venom, not the flesh, were proved to be medicinal; and then says, they are "scourges upon ungrateful and sinful men;" adding the truly astounding absurdity, "that the nations which know not God are the most annoyed with noxious reptiles and other pernicious creatures." (Book ix. c. 1); which if it were true would raise a double difficulty, by showing that one people was scourged because another had neglected to preach the gospel among them. Dr. J. Burnett, too, accounts for animals being suffered to be killed as food for man, by affirming that they thereby gain all the care which man is thus led to bestow upon them, and so are, on the whole, the better for being eaten. (Boyle Lecture, II. 207). But the most singular error has perhaps been fallen into by Dr. Sherlock, and the most unhappy — which yet Bishop Law has cited as a sufficient answer to the objection respecting death: "It is a great instrument of government, and makes men afraid of committing such villanies as the laws of their country have made capital." (Note 34). So that the greatest error in the criminal legislation of all countries forms part of the divine providence, and man has at length discovered, by the light of rea-

son, the folly and the wickedness of using an instrument expressly created by divine Omniscience to be abused!

The remaining portion of King's work, filling the second volume of Bishop Law's edition, is devoted to the explanation of Moral Evil; and here the gratuitous assumption of the "nature of things," and the "laws of nature," more or less pervade the whole as in the former parts of the Inquiry.

The fundamental position of the whole is, that man having been endowed with free will, his happiness consists in making due elections, or in the right exercise of that free will. Five causes are then given of undue elections, in which of course his misery consists as far as that depends on himself; these causes are error, negligence, over-indulgence of free choice, obstinacy or bad habit, and the importunity of natural appetites; which last, it must in passing be remarked, belongs to the head of physical evil, and cannot be assumed in this discussion without begging the question. The great difficulty is then stated and grappled with, namely, how to reconcile these undue elections with divine goodness. The objector states that free will might exist without the power of making undue elections, he being suffered to range, as it were, only among lawful objects of choice. But the answer to this seems sound, that

such a will would only be free in name; it would be free to choose among certain things, but would not be free-will. The objector again urges, that either the choice is free and may fall upon evil objects, against the goodness of God, or it is so restrained as only to fall on good objects. Against freedom of the will King's solution is, that more evil would result from preventing these undue elections than from suffering them, and so the Deity has only done the best he could in the circumstances; a solution obviously liable to the same objection as that respecting Natural Evil. There are three ways, says the Archbishop, in which undue elections might have been prevented; not creating a free agent—constant interference with his free-will—removing him to another state where he would not be tempted to go astray in his choice. A fourth mode may, however, be suggested—creating a free-agent without any inclination to evil, or any temptation from external objects. When our author disposes of the second method, by stating that it assumes a constant miracle, as great in the moral as altering the course of the planets hourly would be in the material universe, nothing can be more sound or more satisfactory. But when he argues that our whole happiness consists in a consciousness of freedom of election, and that we should never know happiness were we restrained in any particu-

lar, it seems wholly inconceivable how he should have omitted to consider the prodigious comfort of a state in which we should be guaranteed against any error or impropriety of choice; a state in which we should both be unable to go astray and always feel conscious of that security. He, however, begs the question most manifestly in dealing with the two other methods stated, by which undue elections might have been precluded. "You would have freedom," says he, "without any inclination to sin; but it may justly be doubted if this is possible *in the present state of things*," (chap. v. s. 5, sub. 2); and again, in answering the question why God did not remove us into another state where no temptation could seduce us, he says: "It is plain that in *the present state of things* it is impossible for men to live without natural evils or the danger of sinning." (*Ib.*) Now the whole question arises upon the constitution of the present state of things. If that is allowed to be inevitable, or is taken as a datum in the discussion, there ceases to be any question at all.

The doctrine of a chain of being is enlarged upon, and with much felicity of illustration. But it only wraps up the difficulty in other words, without solving it. For then the question becomes this—Why did the Deity create such a chain as could not be filled up without misery? It is, indeed, merely restating the fact of evil existing;

for whether we say there is suffering among sentient beings—or the universe consists of beings more or less happy, more or less miserable—or there exists a chain of beings varying in perfection and in felicity—it is manifestly all one proposition. The remark of Bayle upon this view of the subject is really not at all unsound, and is eminently ingenious: "Would you defend a king who should confine all his subjects of a certain age in dungeons, upon the ground that if he did not, many of the cells he had built must remain empty?" The answer of Bishop Law to this remark is by no means satisfactory. He says it assumes that more misery than happiness exists. Now, in this view of the question, the balance is quite immaterial. The existence of any evil at all raises the question as much as the preponderance of evil over good, because the question conceives a perfectly good Being, and asks how such a Being can have permitted any evil at all. Upon this part of the subject both King and Law have fallen into an error which recent discoveries place in a singularly clear light. They say that the argument they are dealing with would lead to leaving the earth to the brutes without human inhabitants. But the recent discoveries in Fossil Osteology have proved that the earth, for ages before the last 5,000 or 6,000 years, was left to the lower animals; nay, that in a still earlier period of its existence

no animal life at all was maintained upon its surface. So that, in fact, the foundation is removed of the *reductio ad absurdum* attempted by the learned prelates.

A singular argument is used towards the latter end of the inquiry. When the Deity, it is said, resolved to create other beings, He must of necessity tolerate imperfect natures in his handiwork, just as he must the equality of a circle's radii when he drew a circle. Who does not perceive the difference? The meaning of the word circle is that the radii are all equal; this equality is a necessary truth. But it is not shown that men could not exist without the imperfections they labor under. Yet this is the argument suggested by these authors while complaining (chap. v. s. 5, sub. 7, div. 7), that Lactantius had not sufficiently answered the Epicurean dilemma; it is the substitute propounded to supply that father's deficiency.—"When, therefore," says the Archbishop, "matter, motion and free-will are constituted, the Deity must necessarily permit corruption of things and the abuse of liberty, or something worse, for these cannot be separated without a contradiction, and God is no more important, because he cannot separate equality of radii from a circle."—Chap. v. s. 5, subs. 7. If he could not have created evil, he would not have been omnipotent; if he would not, he must let his power lie

idle; and rejecting evil have rejected all the good. "Thus," exclaims the author with triumph and self-complacency, "then vanishes this Herculean argument which induced the Epicureans to discard the good Deity, and the Manicheans to substitute an evil one." (*Ib.* subs. 7, *sub. fine.*) Nor is the explanation rendered more satisfactory, or indeed more intelligible, by the concluding passage of all, in which we are told that "from a conflict of two properties, namely, omnipotence and goodness, evils necessarily arise. These attributes amicably conspire together, and yet restrain and limit each other." It might have been expected from hence that no evil at all should be found to exist. "There is a kind of struggle and opposition between them, whereof the evils in nature bear the shadow and resemblance. Here, then, and no where else, may we find the primary and most certain rise and origin of evils."

Such is this celebrated work; and it may safely be affirmed that a more complete failure to overcome a great and admitted difficulty — a more unsatisfactory solution of an important question — is not to be found in the whole history of metaphysical science.

Among the authors who have treated of this subject, a high place is justly given to Archdeacon Balguy, whose work on *Divine Benevolence* is always referred to by Dr. Paley with great com-

mendation. But certain it is that this learned and pious writer either had never formed to himself a very precise notion of the real question under discussion, namely, the compatibility of the appearances which we see and which we consider as evil, with a Being infinitely powerful as well as good; or he had in his mind some opinions respecting the divine nature, opinions of a limitary kind, which he does not state distinctly, although he constantly suffers them to influence his reasonings. Hence, whenever he comes close to the real difficulty he appears to beg the question. A very few instances of what really pervades the whole work will suffice to show how unsatisfactory its general scope is, although it contains, like the treatise of Dr. King and Dr. Law's Commentary, many valuable observations on the details of the subject.

And first we may perceive that what he terms a "*previous remark*," and desires the reader "to carry along through the *whole* proof of divine benevolence," really contains a statement that *the difficulty is to be evaded and not met.* "An intention of producing good," says he, "will be sufficiently apparent in any particular instance if the thing considered can neither be changed nor taken away without loss or harm, *all other things continuing the same.* Should you suppose *various* things in the system changed *at once*, you can

neither judge of the possibility nor the consequences of the changes, having no degree of experience to direct you." Now assuredly this postulate makes the whole question as easy a one as ever metaphysician or naturalist had to solve. For it is no longer—Why did a powerful and benevolent Being create a world in which there is evil—but only—The world being given, how far are its different arrangements consistent with one another? According to this, the earthquake at Lisbon, Voltaire's favorite instance, destroyed thousands of persons, because it is in the nature of things that subterraneous vapors should explode, and that when houses fall on human beings they should be killed. Then if Dr. Balguy goes to his other argument, on which he often dwells, that if this nature were altered, we cannot possibly tell whether worse might not ensue; this, too, is assuming a limited power in the Deity, contrary to the hypothesis. It may most justly be said, that if there be any one supposition necessarily excluded from the whole argument, it is the fundamental supposition of the "previous remark," namely, "all other things continuing the same."

But see how this assumption pervades and paralyzes the whole argument, rendering it utterly inconclusive. The author is to answer an objection derived from the constitution of our appetites for food, and his reply is, that "we cannot tell

how far it was *possible* for the stomachs and palates of animals to be differently formed, unless by some remedy worse than the disease." Again, upon the question of pain: "How do we know that it was *possible* for the uneasy sensation to be confined to particular cases?" So we meet the same fallacy under another form, as evil being the result of "general principles." But no one has ever pushed this so far as Dr. Balguy, for he says, "that in a government so conducted, many events are likely to happen contrary to the intention of its author." He now calls in the aid of chance, or accident.—"It is probable," he says, "that God should be good, for evil is more likely to be *accidental* than appears from experience in the conduct of men." Indeed, his fundamental position of the Deity's benevolence is rested upon this foundation, that "*pleasures only* were intended, and that the pains are accidental consequences, although the means of producing pleasures." The same recourse to accident is repeatedly had. Thus, "the events to which we are exposed in this imperfect state appear to be the *accidental*, not natural, effects of our frame and condition." Now can any one thing be more manifest than that the very first notion of a wise and powerful Being excludes all such assumptions as things happening contrary to His intention; and that when we use the word chance or accident, which only means

our human ignorance of causes, we at once give up the whole question, as if we said, "It is a subject about which we know nothing." So again as to power. "A good design is more *difficult* to be executed, and therefore more likely to be executed *imperfectly*, than an evil one, that is, with a mixture of effects foreign to the design and opposite to it." This at once assumes the Deity to be powerless. But a general statement is afterwards made more distinctly to the same effect. "Most sure it is that he can do all things possible. But are we in any degree competent judges of the bounds of possibility?" So again under another form nature is introduced as something different from its author, and offering limits to his power. "It is plainly not the method of nature to obtain her ends instantaneously." Passing over such propositions as that "*useless* evil is a thing never seen," (when the whole question is why the same ends were not attained without evil), and a variety of other subordinate assumptions contrary to the hypothesis, we may rest with this general statement, which almost every page of Dr. Balguy's book bears out, that the question which he has set himself to solve is anything rather than the real one touching the Origin of Evil; and that this attempt at a solution is as ineffectual as any of those which we have been considering.

Is, then, the question wholly incapable of solu-

tion, which all these learned and ingenious men have so entirely failed in solving? Must the difficulty remain forever unsurmounted, and only be approached to discover that it is insuperable? *Must the subject, of all others the most interesting for us to know well, be to us always as a sealed book, of which we can never know anything?* From the nature of the thing—from the question relating to the operation of a power which, to our limited faculties, must ever be incomprehensible—there seems too much reason for believing that nothing precise or satisfactory ever will be attained by human reason regarding this great argument; and that the bounds which limit our views will only be passed when we have quitted the encumbrances of our mortal state, and are permitted to survey those regions beyond the sphere of our present circumscribed existence. The other branch of Natural Theology, that which investigates the evidences of Intelligence and Design, and leads us to a clear apprehension of the Deity's power and wisdom, is as satisfactorily cultivated as any other department of science, rests upon the same species of proof, and affords results as precise as they are sublime. This branch will never be distinctly known, and will always so disappoint the inquirer as to render the lights of Revelation peculiarly acceptable, although even those lights leave much of it still

involved in darkness — still mysterious and obscure.*

Yet let us endeavor to suggest some possible explication, while we admit that nothing certain, nothing entirely satisfactory can be reached. The failure of the great writers whose works we have been contemplating may well teach us humility, make us distrust ourselves, and moderate within us any sanguine hopes of success. But they should not make us wholly despair of at least showing in what direction the solution of the difficulty is to be sought, and whereabouts it will probably be found situated, when our feeble reason shall be strengthened and expanded. For one cause of their discomfiture certainly has been their aiming too high, attempting a complete solution of a problem which only admitted of approximation, and discussion of limits.

It is admitted on all hands that the demonstration is complete which shows the existence of intelligence and design in the universe. The structure of the eye and ear in exact confirmity to the laws of optics and acoustics, shows as clearly as any experiment can show anything, that the source, cause or origin is common both to the

* The human race has from time immemorial been afflicted with so-called revelations, all claiming inspiration, all conflicting, and all being equally "mysterious and obscure." The wars arising among these sectarians have retarded civilization, and deluged the earth in blood. The revelations of science, founded upon reason and demonstration, have proved the only safe and beneficent guide.—*Pub.*

properties of light and the formation of the lenses and retina in the eye — both to the properties of sound and the tympanum, malleus, incus and stapes of the ear. No doubt whatever can exist upon the subject, any more than, if we saw a particular order issued to a body of men to perform certain uncommon evolutions, and afterwards saw the same body performing those same evolutions, we could doubt their having received the order. A designing and intelligent and skillful author of these admirably adapted works is equally a clear inference from the same facts. We can no more doubt it than we can question, when we see a mill grinding corn into flour, that the machinery was made by some one who designed by means of it to prepare the materials of bread. The same conclusions are drawn in a vast variety of other instances, both with respect to the parts of human and other bodies, and with respect to most of the other arrangements of nature. Similar conclusions are also drawn from our consciousness, and the knowledge which it gives us of the structure of the mind.* Thus we find that attention quickens

*While it is true that the argument of Design, here given, places the subject one step in advance, it is still unsatisfactory, because it fails to explain to us who designed the designer, and the mystery of creation still remains unsolved.

"What think you of an uncaused cause of everything?" is the pertinent question which Bishop Watson, in his *Apology for the Bible*, asked, and vainly asked, of the celebrated deist, Thomas Paine.—*Pub.*

memory and enables us to recollect; and that habit renders all exertions and all acquisitions easy, beside having the effect of alleviating pain.

But when we carry our survey into other parts, whether of the natural or moral system, we cannot discover any design at all. We frequently perceive structures the use of which we know nothing about; parts of the animal frame that apparently have no functions to perform—nay, that are the source of pain without yielding any perceptible advantage; arrangements and movements of bodies which are of one particular kind, and yet we are quite at a loss to discern any reason why they might not have been of many other descriptions; operations of nature that seem to serve no purpose whatever; and other operations and other arrangements, chosen equally without any beneficial view, and yet which often give rise to much apparent confusion and mischief. Now, the question is, *first*, whether in any one of these cases of arrangement and structures with no visible object at all, we can for a moment suppose that there really is no object answered, or only conceive that we have been unable to discover it? *Secondly*, whether in the cases where mischief sometimes is perceived, and no other purpose appears to be effected, we do not almost as uniformly lay the blame on our own ignorance, and conclude, not that the arrangement was made without any design, and that mischief

arises without any contriver, but that if we knew the whole case we should find a design and contrivance, and also that the apparent mischief would sink into the general good? It is not necessary to admit, for our present purpose, this latter proposition, though it brings us closer to the matter in hand; it is sufficient for the present to admit, what no one doubts, that when a part of the body, for instance, is discovered, to which, like the spleen, we cannot assign any function in the animal system, we never think of concluding that it is made for no use, but only that we have as yet not been able to discover its use.

Now, let us ask, why do we, without any hesitation whatever, or any exception whatever, always and immediately arrive at this conclusion respecting intelligence and design? Nothing could be more unphilosophical, nay, more groundless, than such a process of reasoning, if we had only been able to trace design in one or two instances; for instance, if we found only the eye to show proofs of contrivance, it would be wholly gratuitous, when we saw the ear, to assume that it was adapted to the nature of sound, and still more so, if, on examination, we perceived it bore no perceptible relation to the laws of acoustics. The proof of contrivance in one particular is nothing like a proof, nay, does not even furnish the least presumption of contrivance in other particulars;

because, *a priori*, it is just as easy to suppose one part of nature to be designed for a purpose, and another part, nay, all other parts, to be formed at random and without any contrivance, as to suppose that the formation of the whole is governed by design. Why, then, do we, invariably and undoubtedly, adopt the course of reasoning which has been mentioned, and never for a moment suspect anything to be formed without some reason — some rational purpose? The only ground of this belief is, that we have been able distinctly to trace design in so vast a majority of cases as leaves us no power of doubting that, if our faculties had been sufficiently powerful, or our investigation sufficiently diligent, we should also have been able to trace it in those comparatively few instances respecting which we still are in the dark.

It may be worth while to give a few instances of the ignorance in which we once were of design in some important arrangements of nature, and of the knowledge which we now possess to show the purpose of their formation. Before Sir Isaac Newton's optical discoveries we could not tell why the structure of the eye was so complex, and why several lenses and humors were required to form a picture of objects upon the retina. Indeed, until Dolland's subsequent discovery of the achromatic effect of combining various glasses, and Mr. Blair's still more recent experiments on the powers of

different refracting media, we were not able distinctly to perceive the operation and use of the complicacy in the structure of the eye. We now well understand its nature, and are able to comprehend how that which had at one time, nay, for ages, seemed to be an unnecessary complexity, forms the most perfect of all optical instruments, and according to the most certain laws of refraction and of dispersion.

So, too, we had observed for some centuries the forms of the orbits in which the heavenly bodies move, and we had found these to be ellipses with a very small eccentricity. But why this was the form of those orbits no one could even conjecture. If any person, the most deeply skilled in mathematical science, and the most internally convinced of the universal prevalence of design and contrivance in the structure of the universe, had been asked what reason there was for the planets moving in ellipses so nearly approaching to circles, he could not have given any good reason, at least beyond a guess. The force of gravitation, even admitting that to be, as it were, a condition of the creation of matter, would have made those bodies revolve in ellipses of any degree of eccentricity just as well, provided the angle and the force of projection had been varied. Then, why was this form rather than any other chosen? No one knew; yet no one doubted that there was ample

reason for it. Accordingly the sublime discoveries of Lagrange and La Place have shown us that this small eccentricity is one material element in the formula by which it is shown that all the irregularities of the system are periodical, and that the deviation never can exceed a certain amount on either hand.

But, again, while we are ignorant of this, perhaps the most sublime truth in all science, we were always arguing as if the system had an imperfection, as if the disturbing forces of the different planets and the sun, acting on one another, constantly changed the orbits of each planet, and must, in a course of ages, work the destruction of the whole planetary arrangement which we had contemplated with so great admiration and with awe. It was deemed enough if we could show that this derangement must be extremely slow, and that, therefore, the system might last for many more ages without requiring any interposition of omnipotent skill to preserve it by rectifying its motions. Thus one of the most celebrated writers above cited argues that, "from the nature of gravitation and the concentricity of the orbits, the irregularities produced are so slowly operated in contracting, dilating and inclining those orbits, that the system may go on for many thousand years before any extraordinary interference becomes necessary in order to correct it." And Dr.

Burnett adds, that "those small irregularities cast no discredit on the good contrivance of the whole." Nothing, however, could cast greater discredit if it were as he supposed, and as all men previous to the late discoveries supposed; it was only, they rather think, a "small irregularity," which was every hour tending to the destruction of the whole system, and which must have deranged or confounded its whole structure long before it destroyed it. Yet now we see that the wisdom, to which a thousand years are as one day, not satisfied with constructing a fabric which might last for "many thousand years without His interference," has so formed it that it may thus endure forever.

Now if such be the grounds of our belief in the universal prevalence of Design, and such the different lights which at different periods of our progress in science we possess upon this branch of the divine government; if we undoubtingly believe that contrivance is universal only because we can trace and comprehend it in a great majority of instances, and if the number of exceptions to the rule is occasionally diminished as our knowledge of the particulars is from time to time extended — may we not apply the same principle to the apprehension of Benevolent purpose, and infer from the number of instances in which we plainly perceive a good intention, that if we were better

acquainted with those cases in which a contrary intention is now apparent, we should there, too, find the generally pervading character of Benevolence to prevail? Not only is this the manner in which we reason respecting the Design of the Creator from examining his works; it is the manner in which we treat the conduct of our fellow-creatures. A man of the most extensive benevolence and strictest integrity in his general deportment has done something equivocal; nay, something apparently harsh and cruel; we are slow to condemn him; we give him credit for acting with a good motive and for a righteous purpose; we rest satisfied that "if we only knew everything he would come out blameless." This arises from a just and a sound view of human character, and its general consistency with itself. The same reasoning may surely be applied with all humility and reverence, to the works and the intentions of the great Being who has implanted in our minds the principles which lead to that just and sound view of the deeds and motives of men.

But let the argument be rested upon our course of reasoning respecting divine contrivance. The existence of Evil is in no case more apparent than the existence of Disorder seems to be in many things. To go no further than the last example which has been given — the mathematician could perceive the derangement in the planetary orbits,

could demonstrate that it must ensue from the mutual action of the heavenly bodies on each other, could calculate its progress with the utmost exactness, could tell with all nicety how much it would alter the forms of the orbits in a given time, could foresee the time when the whole system must be irretrievably destroyed by its operation as a mathematical certainty. Nothing that we call evil can be much more certainly perceived than this derangement, of itself an evil, certainly a great imperfection, if the system was observed by the mind of man as we regard human works. Yet we now find, from well considering some things which had escaped attention, that the system is absolutely free from derangement; that all the disturbances counterbalance each other; and that the orbits never can either be flattened or bulged out beyond a definite or very inconsiderable quantity. Can any one doubt that there is also a reason for even the small and limited, this regular and temporary derangement? Why it exists at all, or in any the least degree, we as yet know not. But who will presume to doubt that it has a reason which would at once satisfy our minds were it known to us? Nay, who will affirm that the discovery of it may not yet be in reserve for some later and happier age? Then are we not entitled to apply the same reasoning to what at present appears Evil in a system of which, after all we

know of it, so much still remains concealed from our view?

The mere act of creation in a Being of wisdom so admirable and power so vast, seems to make it extremely probable that perfect goodness accompanies the exertion of his perfect skill. There is something so repugnant to all our feelings, but also to all the conceptions of our reason, in the supposition of such a Being desiring the misery, for its own sake, of the Beings whom he voluntarily called into existence and endowed with a sentient nature, that the mind naturally and irresistibly recoils from such a thought. But this is not all. If the nature of that great Being were evil, his power being unbounded, there would be some proportion between the amounts of ills and the monuments of that power. Yet we are struck dumb with the immensity of His works to which no imperfection can be ascribed, and in which no evil can be traced, while the amount of mischief that we see might sink into a most insignificant space; and is such as a being of inconsiderable power and very limited skill could easily have accomplished. This is not the same consideration with the balance of good against evil; and inquirers do not seem to have sufficiently attended to it. The argument, however, deserves much attention, for it is purely and strictly inductive. The divine nature is shown to be clothed with pro-

digious power and incomparable wisdom and skill, —power and skill so vast and so exceeding our comprehension that we ordinarily term them infinite, and are only inclined to conceive the possibility of limiting, by the course of the argument upon evil, one alternative of which is assumed to raise an exception. But admitting on account of the question under discussion, that we have only a right to say that power and skill are prodigiously great, though possibly not boundless, they are plainly shown in the phenomena of the universe to be the attributes of a Being, who, if evil-disposed, could have made the monuments of Ill upon a scale resembling those of Power and Skill; so that if those things which seem to us evil be really the result of a mischievous design in such a Being, we cannot comprehend why they are upon so entirely different a scale. This is a strong presumption from the facts that we are wrong in imputing those appearances to such a disposition. If so, what seems evil must needs be capable of some other explanation consistent with divine goodness —that is to say, would not prove to be evil at all if we knew the whole of those facts.

But it is necessary to proceed a step further, especially with a view to the fundamental position now contended for, the extending to the question of Benevolence the same principles which we apply to that of Intelligence. The evil which exists,

or that which we suppose to be evil, not only is of a kind and a magnitude requiring inconceivably less power and less skill than the admitted good of the creation—it also bears a very small proportion in amount; quite as small a proportion as the cases of unknown or undiscoverable design bear to those of acknowledged and proved contrivance. Generally speaking, the preservation and the happiness of sensitive creatures appears to be the great object of creative exertion and conservative providence. The expanding of our faculties, both bodily and mentally, is accompanied with pleasure; the exercise of those powers is almost always attended with gratification; all labor so acts as to make rest peculiarly delicious; much of labor is enjoyment; the gratification of those appetites by which both the individual is preserved and the race is continued, is highly pleasurable to all animals; and it must be observed that instead of being attracted by grateful sensations to do anything requisite for our good or even our existence, we might have been just as certainly urged by the feeling of pain, or the dread of it, which is a kind of suffering in itself. Nature, then, resembles the law-giver who, to make his subjects obey, should prefer holding out rewards for compliance with his commands rather than denounce punishments for disobedience. But nature is yet more kind; she is gratuitously kind; she not only pre-

fers inducement to threat or compulsion, but she adds more gratification than was necessary to make us obey her calls. How well might all creation have existed and been continued, though the air had not been balmy in spring, or the shade and the spring refreshing in summer; had the earth not been enamelled with flowers, and the air scented with perfumes! How needless for the propagation of plants was it that the seed should be enveloped in fruits the most savory to our palate, and if those fruits serve some other purpose, how foreign to that purpose was the formation of our nerves so framed as to be soothed or excited by their flavor! We here perceive design, because we trace adaptation. But we at the same time perceive benevolent design, because we perceive gratuitous and supererogatory enjoyment bestowed. Thus, too, see the care with which animals of all kinds are tended from their birth. The mother's instinct is not more certainly the means of securing and providing for her young, than her gratification in the act of maternal care is great and is also needless for making her perform that duty. The grove is not made vocal during pairing and incubation, in order to secure the laying or the hatching of eggs; for if it were as still as the grave, or were filled with the most discordant croaking, the process would be as well performed. So, too, mark the care with which injuries are

remedied by what has been correctly called the *vis medicatrix*. Is a muscle injured?—Suppuration takes place, the process of granulation succeeds, and new flesh is formed to supply the gap, or if that is less wide, a more simple healing process knits together the severed parts. Is a bone injured?—A process commences by which an extraordinary secretion of bony matter takes place, and the void is supplied. Nay, the irreparable injury of a joint gives rise to the formation of a new hinge, by which the same functions may be not inconveniently, though less perfectly, performed. Thus, too, recovery of vigor after sickness is provided for by increased appetite; but there is here superadded, generally, a feeling of comfort and lightness, an enjoyment of existence so delightful, that it is a common remark how nearly this compensates the sufferings of the illness. In the economy of the mind it is the same thing. All our exertions are stimulated by curiosity, and the gratification is extreme of satisfying it. But it might have been otherwise ordered, and some painful feeling might have been made the only stimulant to the acquisition of knowledge. So, the charm of novelty is proverbial; but it might have been the unceasing cause of the most painful alarms. Habit renders every thing easy; but the repetition might have only increased the annoyance. The loss of one organ makes the others

more acute. But the partial injury might have caused, as it were, a general paralysis. 'Tis thus that Paley is well justified in exclaiming, "It is a happy world after all!" The pains and the sufferings, bodily and mental, to which we are exposed, if they do not sink into nothing, at least retreat within comparatively narrow bounds; the ills are hardly seen when we survey the great and splendid picture of worldly enjoyment or ease.

But the existence of considerable misery is undeniable: and the question is, of course, confined to that. Its exaggeration, in the ordinary estimate both of the vulgar and of skeptical reasoners, is equally certain. Paley, Bishop Sumner, as well as Derham, King, Ray and others of the older writers, have made many judicious and generally correct observations upon its amount, and they, as well as some of the able and learned authors of the *Bridgwater Treatises*, have done much in establishing deductions necessary to be made, in order that we may arrive at the true amount. That many things, apparently unmixed evils, when examined more narrowly, prove to be partially beneficial, is the fair result of their well-meant labors; and this, although anything rather than a proof that there is no evil at all, yet is valuable as still further proving the analogy between this branch of the argument and that upon design; and in giving hopes that all may possibly

be found hereafter to be good, as everything will assuredly be found to be contrived with an intelligent and useful purpose. It may be right to add a remark or two upon some evils, and those of the greatest magnitude in the common estimate of human happiness, with a view of further illustrating this part of the subject.

Mere imperfection must altogether be deducted from the account. It never can be contended that any evil nature can be ascribed to the first cause, merely for not having endowed sentient creatures with greater power or wisdom, for not having increased and multiplied the sources of enjoyment, or for not having made those pleasures which we have more exquisitely grateful. No one can be so foolish as to argue that the Deity is either limited in power, or deficient in goodness, because he has chosen to create some beings of a less perfect order than others. The mere negation in the creating of some, indeed of many, nay, of any conceivable number of desirable attributes, is therefore no proper evidence of evil design or of limited power in the Creator—it is no proof of the existence of evil properly so called. But does not this also erase death from the catalogue of ills? It might well please the Deity to create a mortal being which, consisting of soul and body, was only to live upon this earth for a limited number of years. If, when that time has expired, this being is re-

moved to another and a superior state of existence, no evil whatever accrues to it from the change; and all views of the government of this world lead to the important and consolitary conclusion, that such is the design of the Creator; that he cannot have bestowed on us minds capable of such expansion and culture only to be extinguished when they have reached their highest pitch of improvement; or if this be considered as begging the question by assuming benevolent design, we cannot easily conceive that while the mind's force is so little affected by the body's decay, the destruction or dissolution of the latter should be the extinction of the former. But that death operates as an evil of the very highest kind in two ways is obvious; the dread of it often embitters life, and the death of friends brings to the mind by far its most painful infliction; certainly the greatest suffering it can undergo without any criminal consciousness of its own.

For this evil, then—this grievous and admitted evil—how shall we account? But first let us consider whether it be not unavoidable; not merely under the present dispensation, and in the existing state of things; for that is wholly irrelevant to the question which is raised upon the fitness of this very state of things; but whether it be not a necessary evil. That man might have been created immortal is not denied; but if it were the

will of the Deity to form a limited being and to place him upon the earth for only a certain period of time, his death was the necessary consequence of this determination. Then as to the pain which one person's removal inflicts upon surviving parties, this seems the equally necessary consequence of their having affections. For if any being feels love towards another, this implies his desire that the intercourse with that other should continue; or what is the same thing, the repugnance and aversion to its ceasing; that is, he must suffer affliction for that removal of the beloved object. To create sentient beings devoid of all feelings of affection was no doubt possible to Omnipotence; but to endow those beings with such feelings as would give the constant gratification derived from the benevolent affections, and yet to make them wholly indifferent to the loss of the objects of those affections, was not possible even for Omnipotence; because it was a contradiction in terms, equivalent to making a thing both exist and not exist at one and the same time. Would there have been any considerable happiness in a life stripped of these kindly affections? We cannot affirm that there would not, because we are ignorant what other enjoyments might have been substituted for the indulgence of them. But neither can we affirm that any such substitution could have been found; and it lies upon those who deny the necessary connec-

tion between the human mind, or any sentient being's mind, and grief for the loss of friends, to show that there are other enjoyments which could furnish an equivalent to the gratification derived from the benevolent feelings. The question then reduces itself to this: Wherefore did a being, who could have made sentient beings immortal, choose to make them mortal? or, Wherefore has he placed man upon the earth for a time only? or, Wherefore has he set bounds to the powers and capacities which he has been pleased to bestow upon his creatures? And this is a question which we certainly never shall be able to solve; but a question extremely different from the one more usually put—How happens it that a good being has made a world full of misery and death?

In the necessary ignorance wherein we are of the whole designs of the Deity, we cannot wonder if some things, nay, if many things, are to our faculties inscrutable. But we assuredly have no right to say that those difficulties which try and vex us are incapable of a solution, any more than we have to say, that those cases in which as yet we can see no trace of design, are not equally the result of intelligence, and equally conducive to a fixed and useful purpose with those in which we have been able to perceive the whole, or nearly the whole scheme. Great as have been our achievements in physical astronomy, we are as yet

wholly unable to understand why a power pervades the system acting inversely as the squares of the distance from the point to which it attracts, rather than a power acting according to any other law; and why it has been the pleasure of the almighty Architect of that universe, that the orbits of the planets should be nearly circular instead of approaching to, or being exactly the same with many other trajectories of a nearly similar form, though of other properties; nay, instead of being curves of a wholly different class and shape. Yet we never doubt that there was a reason for this choice; nay, we fancy it possible that even on earth we may hereafter understand it more clearly than we now do: and never question that in another state of being we may be permitted to enjoy the contemplation of it. Why should we doubt that, at least in that higher state, we may also be enabled to perceive such an arrangement as shall make evil wholly disappear from our present system, by showing that it was necessary and inevitable, even in the works of the Deity; or, which is the same thing, that its existence conduces to such a degree of perfection and happiness upon the whole, as could not, even by Omnipotence, be attained without it; or, which is the same thing, that the whole creation as it exists, taking both worlds together, is perfect, and incapable of being in any particular changed without being made worse and less perfect?

Taking both worlds together—For certainly were our views limited to the present sublunary state, we may well affirm that no solution whatever could even be imagined of the difficulty—if we are never again to live; if those we here loved are forever lost to us; if our faculties can receive no further expansion; if our mental powers are only trained and improved to be extinguished at their acme—then indeed are we reduced to the melancholy and gloomy dilemma of the Epicureans; and evil is confessed to checker, nay, almost to cloud over our whole lot, without the possibility of comprehending why, or of reconciling its existence with the supposition of a providence at once powerful and good. But this inference is also an additional argument for a future state, when we couple it with those other conclusions respecting the economy of the world to which we are led by wholly different routes, when we investigate the phenomena around us and within us.

Suppose, for example, it should be found that there are certain purposes which can in no way whatever—no conceivable way—be answered except by placing man in a state of trial or probation; suppose the essential nature of mind shall be found to be such that it could not in any way whatever exist so as to be capable of the greatest purity and improvement—in other words, the highest perfection—without having undergone a

probation; or suppose it should be found impossible to communicate certain enjoyments to rational and sentient beings without having previously subjected them to certain trials and certain sufferings—as, for instance, the pleasures derived from a consciousness of perfect security, the certainty that we can suffer and perish no more—this surely is a possible supposition. Now, to continue the last example—Whatever pleasure there is in the contrast between ease and previous vexation or pain, whatever enjoyment we derive from the feeling of absolute security after the vexation and uncertainty of a precarious state, implies a previous suffering—a previous state of precarious enjoyment; and not only implies it but necessarily implies it, so that the power of Omnipotence itself could not convey to us the enjoyment without having given us the previous suffering. Then is it not possible that the object of an all powerful and perfectly benevolent being should be to create like beings, to whom as entire happiness, as complete and perfect enjoyment, should be given as any created beings—that is, any being, except the Creator himself—can by possibility enjoy? This is certainly not only a very possible supposition, but it appears to be quite consistent with, if it be not a necessary consequence of, his being perfectly good as well as powerful and wise. Now we have shown, therefore, that such being supposed the

design of Providence, even Omnipotence itself could not accomplish this design, as far as one great and important class of enjoyments is concerned, without the previous existence of some pain, some misery. Whatever gratification arises from relief—from contrast—from security succeeding anxiety—from restoration of lost affections—from renewing severed connections—and many others of a like kind, could not by any possibility be enjoyed unless the correlative suffering had first been undergone. Nor will the argument be at all impeached by observing, that one Being may be made to feel the pleasure of ease and security by seeing others subjected to suffering and distress; for that assumes the infliction of misery on those others; it is "*alterius* spectare laborem" that we are supposing to be sweet; and this is still partial evil.

As the whole argument respecting evil must, from the nature of the question, resolve itself into either a proof of some absolute or mathematical necessity not to be removed by infinite power, or the showing that some such proof may be possible although we have not yet discovered it, an illustration may naturally be expected to be attainable from mathematical considerations. Thus, we have already adverted to the law of periodical irregularities in the solar system. Any one before it was discovered seemed entitled to expatiate upon

the operation of the disturbing forces arising from mutual attraction, and to charge the system arranged upon the principle of universal gravitation with want of skill, nay, with leading to inevitable mischief — mischief or evil of so prodigious an extent as to exceed incalculably all the instances of evil and of suffering which we see around us in this single planet. Nevertheless, what then appeared so clearly to be a defect and an evil, is now well known to be the very absolute perfection of the whole heavenly architecture.

Again, we may derive a similar illustration from a much more limited instance, but one immediately connected with strict mathematical reasoning, and founded altogether in the nature of necessary truth. The problem has been solved by mathematicians, Sir Isaac Newton having first investigated it, of finding the form of a symmetrical solid, or solid of revolution, which in moving through a fluid shall experience the least possible resistance. The figure bears a striking resemblance to that of a fish. Now suppose a fish were formed exactly in this shape, and that some animal endowed with reason were placed upon a portion of its surface, and able to trace its form for only a limited extent, say at the narrow part, where the broad portion or end of the moving body were opposed, or seemed as if it were opposed, to the surrounding fluid when the fish moved — the reasoner

would at once conclude that the contrivance of the fish's form was very inconvenient, and that nothing could be much worse adapted for expeditious or easy movement through the waters.

Yet it is certain that upon being afterwards permitted to view THE WHOLE body of the fish, what had seemed a defect and an evil, not only would appear plainly to be none at all, but it would appear manifest that this seeming evil or defect was a part of the most perfect and excellent structure which it was possible even for Omnipotence and Omniscience to have adopted, and that no other conceivable arrangement could by possibility have produced so much advantage, or tended so much to fulfill the design in view. Previous to being enlightened by such an enlarged view of the whole facts, it would thus be a rash and unphilosophical thing in the reasoner whose existence we are supposing to pronounce an unfavorable opinion. Still more unwise would it be if numerous other observations had evinced traces of skill and goodness in the fish's structure. The true and the safe conclusion would be to suspend an opinion which could only be unsatisfactorily formed upon imperfect data; and to rest in the humble hope and belief that one day all would appear for the best.

THE END.

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